



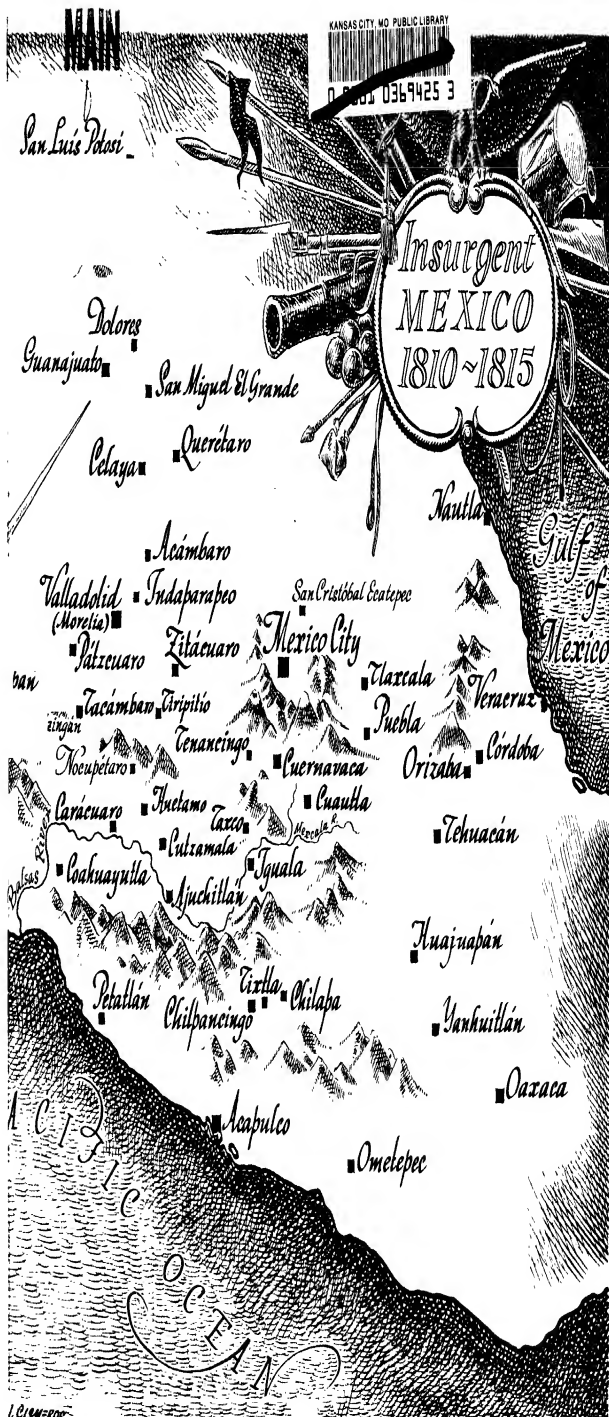
AFTER MANY YEARS of research and study, Dr. Wilbert H. Timmons has brought to life the era of the Mexican Revolution for Independence and the colorful men who dominated the scene.

The central figure, José María Morelos, emerges as an inspired warrior and statesman with final victory almost within his grasp, but destined to suffer, as in a Greek tragedy, the remorse of defeat and death.

However, as the author shows, the ideas and institutions of Morelos were to survive his execution in the village of San Cristóbal Ecatepec. They were destined to become solid pillars in the structure of modern Mexico.

*Typography and Dust Jacket
designed by Carl Hertzog*

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MORELOS OF MEXICO



Toxi M. A. G. P.
morelos

MORELOS
Priest Soldier Statesman
of
MEXICO



by
WILBERT H. TIMMONS
PROFESSOR OF HISTORY
Texas Western College

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*The insignia on the title page is the seal of the
Insurgent Congress which Morelos organized in 1813.*

PREFACE

MY INTEREST in José María Morelos, one of Mexico's most outstanding men, extends over much of the past fifteen years, a significant portion of which I have spent in research in the Latin American Collection of the University of Texas and the chief depositories of Mexico City and Morelia.

This is the first full-length biography of Morelos in English, for which there has been a great need for some time. Although there are several biographies of Morelos by Mexican authors which have considerable merit, particularly the one by Alfonso Teja Zabre, language is frequently a barrier in the United States for those other than the specialist. The biographical sketches by James Magner and John Anthony Caruso are good, though quite brief. I have endeavored therefore to write a narrative which would be both scholarly and readable, in order to contribute to what is already known about Morelos and his career, and to provide a means whereby the college student and the general public in the United States might be able to gain a greater familiarity with this remarkable man.

No book could possibly be written and published without the assistance of many people, and to them I am extremely indebted. I wish to express my deep gratitude and sincere thanks to the following, who have been so helpful: Dr. Nettie Lee Benson, Librarian of the Latin American Collection of the University of Texas; Mrs. Dorothy Estes Knepper, Director of the San Jacinto Museum of History, San Jacinto Monument, Texas; Sr. Ignacio Rubio Mañé, Director, Archivo General de la Nación, and Sra. María Guzmán, Director, Archivo del Instituto de Antropología e Historia, both of Mexico City; Sr. Cristóbal Bermúdez Plata of the Archivo de Indias, Seville, Spain; and José Luis Magaña, Director of the Casa de Morelos in Morelia. I owe much to the late Professor Charles W. Hackett, who first suggested to

PREFACE

me the need for a study of Morelos, and who supervised my first manuscript on him.

To my colleagues on the faculty of Texas Western College who assisted me with their advice, their skills, and their encouragement, I am deeply appreciative. President Joseph M. Ray read the entire manuscript, made many valuable suggestions, and arranged for the necessary financial assistance which made publication possible. The Faculty Committee on Organized Research made several grants of funds which greatly aided my work, and a number of my colleagues in the Department of History read portions of my manuscript and offered many constructive criticisms. It was a rich and rewarding experience for me to work with Carl Hertzog who designed this book. I owe special thanks to Professor Samuel D. Myres, Chairman of the Faculty Committee on Publications, for his editorial skill, timely words of encouragement, and tireless efforts in preparing the manuscript for the press.

Finally, I want to acknowledge and thank José Cisneros, who drew the illustrations, Margarita Lopez, who typed the manuscript, and Shirley Gonzalez and Roberta Logerman, who compiled the index. My wife Laura has been an invaluable aid ever since I first became interested in the subject of this book, and has never failed to be a source of inspiration, especially when it was most needed.

WILBERT H. TIMMONS

Texas Western College
El Paso, Texas
January, 1963

CONTENTS

Preface	vii
Introduction	ix
Chapter I <i>The Early Years</i>	1
Chapter II <i>The Cura of Carácuaro</i>	16
Chapter III <i>Revolutionary Beginnings</i>	31
Chapter IV <i>Spreading the Revolution</i>	44
Chapter V <i>The Rayón Movement</i>	57
Chapter VI <i>The Conquest of the South</i>	69
Chapter VII <i>Events in Mexico City</i>	85
Chapter VIII <i>Morelos' Reform Program</i>	97
Chapter IX <i>The Servant of the Nation</i>	111
Chapter X <i>Morelos in Decline</i>	126
Chapter XI <i>The Quest for Foreign Aid</i>	140
Chapter XII <i>The Last Days</i>	154
Bibliographical Essay	169
Index	175



*Battle flag of Morelos, inscribed: "She conquers
equally with her eyes and her talons."*

INTRODUCTION

EARLY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY *the village of San Agustín de las Cuevas, situated about fifteen miles south of Mexico City on the highway to Cuernavaca, was a quiet little place whose unhurried pace and leisurely existence were seldom disturbed. But on November 21, 1815, the scene was different. By late afternoon a large crowd had gathered in the square, including several hundred people from Mexico City, and there was an air of anticipation and excitement which the town had never known before. For everyone anxiously awaited the arrival of a famous insurgent — José María Morelos, the greatest leader of the movement for Mexican independence since Miguel Hidalgo.*

Presently, the sight of a large cloud of dust down the street and the noise of horses' hooves announced the approach of the renowned visitor, and in a few moments he came into view. He was mounted on horseback, but he did not ride at the head of an army, or smile at the populace, or wave to the señoritas. Instead, he was completely surrounded by an armed escort, which closely scrutinized every move he made. His legs were in shackles, and his face was drawn and without expression. Instead of cheers from the crowd, he received only vile and humiliating insults. For José María Morelos, chief of the revolution, was a prisoner of the viceroy, having been captured by royalist forces near Tescmalaca some two weeks before. Now he was being led to Mexico City to be tried for taking up arms against his government and his church.

The physical appearance of the prisoner was not greatly impressive. As he was helped off his horse and given a jug of water to quench his thirst, it could be seen that he was small in stature, heavy set, with rough facial features, thick lips, and deep brown coloring. He wore a handkerchief tied about his head, as he had

INTRODUCTION

done all during his revolutionary career. Most of the time he ignored what was taking place around him, and just stared into space. If he had a single thought, it was not concern for his own fate, for he knew what that would be, but for the future of the cause he had led.

But even if José María Morelos was not particularly imposing in looks, he was no ordinary man, as his captors were well aware; for the viceroy had rewarded them liberally with honors and titles for their efforts in taking him prisoner. Morelos had been a priest before he joined the revolution of Hidalgo in 1810. After the capture and death of Hidalgo in 1811 Morelos had emerged as the greatest military and political figure the independence period produced. He had organized and trained revolutionary armies and had won many great victories throughout southern Mexico. He had clarified the objectives of the revolution, sponsored a declaration of independence from Spain, formulated a comprehensive socio-economic program for the betterment of the Mexican people, and had established at Chilpancingo an insurgent Congress to enact his program into law. He had demonstrated exceptional talent as a leader and had won renown for his personal qualities of unselfish devotion and self-denial. Now in 1815 the Morelos revolution had been in decline for more than a year, and the greater part of its program had remained unfulfilled; but the cornerstone of an independent Mexican nation had been laid, and the flames of a Mexican national spirit had been kindled.

As the shadows lengthened over the main square of the village and announced the approach of evening, Morelos' armed escort completed preparations for the final leg of the journey to the capital. In accordance with viceregal instructions, Morelos was placed in a coach, and the remainder of the trip was undertaken at night to protect the prisoner from further humiliation from the jeering crowds.

The party at length arrived at the capital in the early morning hours of November 22, and Morelos was immediately confined

INTRODUCTION

in the secret prisons of the Inquisition under a heavy guard. Beginning on that same morning and continuing for more than a week, the accused man stood trial and gave testimony before three separate tribunals in answer to a relentless barrage of questions about his life and his revolutionary activities. Throughout the whole ordeal he maintained his characteristic calm and dignity, and with amazing accuracy in his recitation of details, he told the story of his life. As the testimony was given and recorded, the biography of a great man began to unfold. The story of this man, José María Morelos, is the subject of the chapters which follow, told largely in his own words and in those of his contemporaries.

THE EARLY YEARS

SITUATED some two hundred miles west of Mexico City is the city of Morelia, capital of the state of Michoacán, a region of superb scenic beauty. Morelia is not as familiar to the American tourist as Mexico City or Acapulco or points in between, but it is a lovely place which possesses much of the charm it has had since colonial times when it was known as Valladolid. This city was the birthplace of José María Morelos, one of Mexico's most remarkable national heroes, an outstanding military commander, leader of Mexican independence, and a celebrated political and social reformer.

It is recorded that in the city of Valladolid on October 4, 1765, Cura Francisco Gutiérrez de Robles baptized with oil and gave chrism to an infant who was born on September 30 and to whom was given the name José María Teclo, the legitimate son of Manuel Morelos and Juana Pavón, *españoles*.¹ Although the version given by the Mexican historian Carlos María Bustamante that Morelos was born on a ranch on the outskirts of Valladolid is still accepted by some authorities, most now agree that he was born within the city and was in fact a "native of Valladolid," as he stated on numerous occasions during his career.² The Morelian historian Licenciado Juan de la Torre, who obtained much of his information from Morelos' grand-nephew, Licenciado Francisco Pérez Morelos, indicates that Morelos' parents were residents of the hacienda of Sindurio near Valladolid, but moved to the city and lived in a small house next to the chapel of Prendimiento just before Morelos' birth. De la Torre writes that while walking along the street one day, Morelos' mother was suddenly overcome with labor pains and thereupon gave birth to an infant in the doorway of a nearby house.³ Since 1881 this house, located on the southwest corner of García Obesa and La Corregidora

streets in Morelia, has been marked with a plaque which carries an inscription stating that José María Morelos was born there on September 30, 1765.

From ecclesiastical records it can be established that Morelos' parents were respectable people, "of good reputation and Christians of long standing," though quite poor.⁴ His father, Manuel Morelos, was an "honest man," who worked as a carpenter in Valladolid, a trade which he had probably learned from his father, Guillermo Morelos. The general deportment of his family, Morelos declared in 1815, "might not have been edifying, but it was hardly scandalous."⁵

Considerably more information is available regarding Morelos' mother, Doña Juana María Pérez Pavón, from archival materials which have come to light and have been published recently.⁶ Her ancestors for generations had been residents of the town of San Juan Bautista de Apaseo in the jurisdiction of the city of Celaya. She was the daughter of Juana María Molina de Estrada and José Antonio Pavón. He at one time had been connected with the Church, but apparently later became a schoolmaster in Valladolid.⁷ The future mother of Morelos lived in an environment which permitted her to receive a better-than-average education. Judging from her activities later in life, it is evident that she was a remarkable woman, of strong character and firm conviction, deeply devoted to her family and her son, and unquestionably the greatest single influence on him in his early years.⁸ Subsequently, there were two more children, Nicolás and María Antonia Morelos.⁹

There has been considerable controversy about Morelos' racial composition. Since Morelos said that his parents were "Spanish by both lines," and since his baptismal certificate used the word *españoles* to describe his parents, it might seem that he was a creole — that is, a person of Spanish descent born in America. But it is more likely that Morelos was a mestizo, of mixed Spanish and Indian blood, and that the word *españoles* as used by Morelos and in the baptismal certificate should be

interpreted in a political, rather than in a racial or ethnic sense — meaning that his parents were Spanish subjects. Alfonso Teja Zabre adds that the term *españoles* should not be taken seriously because “of the custom during that period of concealing the true ethnic background, since everyone desired to pass not only for creoles but for European Spaniards as well.”¹⁰ Moreover, the phrase *limpio de sangre*, used by Morelos when he was seeking to be ordained, meant simply that he was devoid of Jewish or Moorish blood. Only the pro-Spanish historian Lucas Alamán contends that Morelos was of mixed Indian and negro blood, even though he always called himself Spanish, since the leaders of Mexican independence, though supporting the rights of the Indians and crying out against the injustice of the Conquest, “desired to derive their antecedents from the conquering nation rather than the conquered people.”¹¹ The most reasonable assumption regarding Morelos’ ancestry is that it was “free of mulatto and negro blood, or that of any other bad race,” that his mother was a creole, and that his father was part Indian.¹²

Most of Morelos’ boyhood must have been spent helping his father provide a livelihood for the family. No doubt there were many hardships, and the problem of earning a sufficient family income must have been acute much of the time. Yet there was time in those early years for Morelos to acquire some elementary instruction. From his mother he received some of the essentials of an education, including how to read and write. On the death of his father in 1779 the fourteen-year-old boy was entrusted to the care of his uncle, Felipe Morelos, who lived on an hacienda near Apatzingán.¹³ This change of residence was José Morelos’ first introduction to the *tierra caliente* of southern Mexico.

Felipe Morelos apparently was a man of means, who owned not only a hacienda but also a mule train which he employed in the lucrative trade with the Orient, carrying the rich cargoes of goods overland between Acapulco and Mexico City. The young Morelos worked first as a *labrador* on the hacienda, and later as an *arriero*, or mule driver.¹⁴ At times he gained practical

experience in a most impulsive manner, according to a story General Nicolás Bravo later told Lucas Alamán. On one occasion when Morelos was chasing a bull, he struck his head on a low branch of a tree; the blow threw him from his horse, leaving him in a semi-conscious condition with a permanent scar across his nose.¹⁵

The overland route from Acapulco to Mexico City, known as the China Road, was one of the most important in the commercial life of colonial New Spain. It linked the capital with the celebrated port of Acapulco, the eastern terminus for the Manila galleons, which brought in the rich cargoes from the Orient. Stretching northward overland from Acapulco, the trail went up through the high and rugged Sierra Madre del Sur, through Chilpancingo, the *tierra caliente*, the Río de las Balsas, continuing up the great central plateau through Cuernavaca into the Valley of Mexico and the capital, a total distance of about three hundred miles. Undoubtedly, conditions of travel were primitive, accommodations few, and discomforts manifold. Yet this life as mule driver yielded a regular income, some of which young Morelos invested in mules, and some of which he sent to Valladolid for the support of his family.¹⁶ It gave him a chance on occasion to study a little grammar; it toughened his body and conditioned him for a rigorous, outdoor existence; and it gave him a thorough knowledge of the *tierra caliente*, where some years later he was to lead his insurgent army against the forces of the viceroy. At length, in 1790, Morelos, a young man of twenty-five years, resolved to abandon the outdoor life in favor of the classroom, where he would begin studies for the priesthood and a career in the Church.

During the time Morelos was working as a *labrador* and *arriero*, his mother's fondest hope was that her son should become a priest. The major consideration in shaping his mother's desire was an inheritance in the form of a *capellanía*, or benefice, which Morelos' maternal great-grandfather had established and which was to be awarded to the descendants under certain pre-

THE EARLY YEARS



THE ARRIERO

scribed conditions. These conditions were set forth in the will of Pedro Pérez Pavón, grandfather of Juana Pavón, Morelos' mother, dated March 2, 1750 in San Bautista de Apaseo:

It is my wish that a *capellanía de misas* be established from my property, which amounts to 4,000 pesos; the *capellanes* will be obligated to say forty masses annually in order to receive the income from this principal. . . . I name for the first *capellán* José Antonio Pérez, my natural son, twenty-four years of age, who is to be given title to it provided he is favorably disposed to an ecclesiastical career; should he not be so disposed, the right of this *capellanía* is to descend from the legitimate sons of my brothers, Sebastián and Francisco, and my sister, María Pérez Pavón, giving preference to the oldest rather than the youngest, the son of the male to that of the female, the nearest relationship rather than the most remote; and above all, . . . it is my wish that preference be given to that one who is nearest to being ordained. At this time I name as *patrón* the *juez eclesiástico* of the city of Celaya. . . . In case my lineage should become extinct, it is my wish that the *capellán* should be continually a creole child of this town, a Spanish subject, a legitimate son, and one favorably disposed to an ecclesiastical career. . . .¹⁷

In the succeeding years the value of the property was fixed at 2,800 pesos. On November 4, 1755, the *capellanía* was awarded to the person named in the will, José Antonio Pérez Pavón, although it is not known what his connection with the Church was, nor how long he continued to exercise the function of *capellán*. He did not remain single, however, but fathered at least one child, a daughter, who was Morelos' mother. In 1784 the inheritance passed to José Antonio Martínez Conejo, a descendant through the transverse line. But when his marriage in December, 1789, to Mariana de Caro created a vacancy, a struggle for possession of the inheritance developed among the descendants of the three different lines.¹⁸ The chance of obtaining the award was the reason that Morelos' mother was so eager for him to undertake an ecclesiastical career. By fulfilling that particular condition in the will, Morelos could strengthen considerably his eligibility to the inheritance, which would provide him and his widowed mother a fixed income for the rest of their

lives. It is hardly a coincidence, therefore, that soon after the vacancy developed, Morelos took leave of the *tierra caliente* and the life of the *arriero* to begin his instruction for a career in the Church.

In 1790 when Morelos was about twenty-five years of age he enrolled at San Nicolás College in Valladolid, an institution which had been founded two hundred and fifty years before by the illustrious Vasco de Quiroga.¹⁹ Miguel Hidalgo, who later initiated the revolt that eventually led to Mexican independence, had been a teacher at the college for at least eleven years preceeding Morelos' arrival.²⁰ Appointed rector of the college in early 1790 Hidalgo served in that position for about two years, until he was ordered to the parish of Colima in 1792.²¹ For a year and a half, therefore, the lives of these two great leaders of Mexican independence — Hidalgo, the rector, and Morelos, the student — overlapped at San Nicolás, although it would be a distortion to assume that a particularly close relationship developed between them at that time. No doubt Morelos was impressed by the considerable intellectual attainments and brilliance of his rector and held him in high esteem. On the other hand, since the college was small and Morelos' mature age was conspicuous, the student may have attracted the rector's eye; but there is nothing to suggest that the relationship was intimate, or that the liberal-minded Hidalgo deliberately indoctrinated Morelos or any of the other students with radical ideas. Nevertheless, Hidalgo's personality was such as to create an indelible impression on those with whom he came in contact, and it is not difficult to explain Morelos' great curiosity, some eighteen years later in 1810, about the revolutionary movement which swept through the province of Michoacán, once he had ascertained who its leader was.

At San Nicolás, Morelos studied grammar under Jacinto Mariano Moreno and Latin under José María Alzate.²² Morelos must have worked hard at his studies and applied himself diligently, even if the following recommendation of his work

written by his grammar teacher may have been a bit on the glowing side:

I certify that José María Morelos [it began] has passed under my direction the courses in the minimum and minor studies, and that he has conducted himself with such prudence and irreproachable conduct, that he has never done anything to deserve any kind of punishment; that he has performed the duties of a *decurión* with such application, that he has elevated himself above all the other students. In view of his progress and his interest in justice, it is a pleasure to recommend that he be rewarded with the highest honor in the classroom, . . . for he has performed his functions with the universal applause of all the participants.²³

While Morelos was attending San Nicolás the issue involving the possession of the *capellanía* arose again as the result of a vacancy created by the marriage of the *capellán*, José Antonio Conejo, in December, 1789. In April, 1790, Juana Pavón advanced the candidacy of her son,²⁴ and two months later Morelos formally presented his case before the *juez de testamentos y capellanías*, Juan Antonio de Tapia, declaring that he was engaged in satisfying the requirement of advancing to the ecclesiastical state, to which he "had been inclined since his first years," and that he was an immediate descendant of the founder.²⁵ Nicolás Baquero, Morelos' attorney, presented testimony which attempted to show that his client's claim to the inheritance was better than that of either of his two rivals, Tiburcio Esquiros and José Joaquín Rodríguez Carnero. The argument stated that Morelos was the direct descendant of the founder and the grandson of the first *capellán*, while the rival candidates were descendants only through the transverse line. Moreover, it declared that since the first *capellán*, José Antonio Pérez Pavón, had been specifically named in the will, he could not be disqualified from the inheritance by virtue of his marriage to Juana María Molina de Estrada; and since he was illegitimate, he could contract marriage without impediment. Tiburcio Esquiros subsequently withdrew from the contest; but Luis Camargo, attorney for Rodríguez Carnero, presented testimony

which challenged Morelos' claim. Camargo declared that his client was the great-grandnephew of the founder through a legitimate line, and that he was also the grandson of Doña María Pérez Pavón, whose descendants were expressly named as heirs to the property. On the other hand, he said that Morelos, being descended from the founder by an illegitimate succession because of the status of José Antonio Pérez Pavón, should be excluded. On October 18, 1791, the property was awarded to Rodríguez Carnero, who retained it until his death in 1804.²⁶ This outcome must have been a bitter disappointment not only for Morelos but also for his mother, who for the rest of her life never relaxed her efforts for a moment to obtain the *capellanía* for her son.

In October, 1792, Morelos left San Nicolás College to continue his studies at the Seminario Tridentino, also located in Valladolid. The reason for the change, according to one authority, was that Morelos was thus able to take an intermediate course in Latin, as well as certain other courses which were not being offered at San Nicolás at the time.²⁷ Morelos remained at the Seminario for about two and a half years, receiving instruction in rhetoric and philosophy. According to his teachers he applied himself with such diligence and industry that he led the class.²⁸

In March, 1795, with the completion of three and a half years of work toward the Bachelor of Arts degree, Morelos proceeded to the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico to take his final examinations, in accordance with a clause in the constitution of the university which allowed qualified students of certain provincial colleges with three years of instruction in the arts' courses to receive their degree at that institution.²⁹ On the basis of "examination, approval, and ability," Morelos was awarded the degree of Bachelor of Arts on April 28, 1795.³⁰

The granting of ecclesiastical orders in New Spain during the 18th century followed the regulations established by the Council of Trent in the middle of the 16th century. They provided that a candidate for an ecclesiastical career could be eligible for the

clerical tonsure at the age of fourteen, on condition that he had first received the sacrament of confirmation, could demonstrate ability to read and write, and could give testimony that he had received instruction in the rudiments of the faith.³¹ The four minor orders — acolyte, exorcist, reader, and doorkeeper — were granted together in most cases, the prerequisites being a knowledge of Latin and a favorable recommendation from the candidate's priest or teacher. The major orders consisted of the subdeaconate, the diaconate, and the priesthood, the age requirement for these being twenty-two, twenty-three, and twenty-five years respectively. Ordinarily, an interval of one year was required between the last of the minor orders and the first of the major, and between each one of the major orders. A candidate for any one of the major orders was required to present testimony of his birth, age, character, and conduct, and to submit letters of recommendation attesting to his qualifications. When the candidate had satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements, his application for promotion was then approved by the bishop.³²

Morelos, on November 6, 1795, submitted his request for the first ecclesiastical orders to the Bishop of Michoacán, stating his desire to be admitted to the first clerical tonsure, the four minor orders, and the subdeaconate, and enclosing prescribed credentials.³³ He apparently assumed that his age would allow an exception to be made in his case, inasmuch as a one-year interval was ordinarily required between the minor orders and the first of the major. The six letters of recommendation that accompanied his petition declared that the candidate was the "legitimate son of Manuel Morelos and Juana Pavón, that he was of pure blood by both lines, that he had been educated in the teachings of the Church Fathers, that he was stable in deportment, modest in his actions, God-fearing, and that he took the sacraments frequently."³⁴

To determine the character of an ecclesiastical candidate, church regulations required that his name be published on three

successive religious holidays in each place where the candidate had resided; and should anything detrimental or unfavorable to his name be shown within twenty-four hours after the third religious day, the applicant would automatically become ineligible for promotion. Furthermore, any person who disapproved a candidate but failed to voice his objections became liable to the penalty of excommunication.³⁵ Morelos' name was submitted in Valladolid and Apatzingán on three religious holidays in November, 1795, and no adverse comments about him were registered in either place.³⁶ He therefore received the first clerical tonsure and the four minor orders on December 13 in the episcopal palace of the Bishop of Michoacán, and on December 19 he received the subdeaconate.³⁷

A short time later Morelos accepted an offer from Nicolás Santiago de Herrera, *cura* of the town of Uruapan, to teach grammar and rhetoric to the children there, an appointment which the bishop confirmed on April 6, 1796, with the granting of a license to teach.³⁸ The salary was probably not much, but for the first time since he began his training for the priesthood Morelos was able to send something home to his widowed mother and maiden sister. Evidently he performed his duties satisfactorily during his two years at Uruapan, for Cura Herrera wrote that he had been found worthy of the title of Professor of Grammar and Rhetoric, that he had made his points well, held consultations with the students, preached the gospel forcefully, set a good example for all, and assisted with the sacred rites in an proficient manner.³⁹ On September 21, 1796, Morelos was elevated to the deaconate, a special dispensation again having been granted by the bishop, since Morelos' length of service in the subdeaconate had amounted to only nine months.⁴⁰ Then, with the completion of the one-year requirement in the deaconate, Morelos, in August, 1797, submitted his request for his appointment to the priesthood.⁴¹

At this time it seemed opportune for Morelos' mother to renew her fight to obtain for her son the inheritance which, it will be

remembered, had been established by her grandfather. Another three-cornered struggle resulted. It involved, in addition to Morelos, the current *capellán*, José Joaquín Rodríguez Carnero, who had held the property since 1791, and José Ignacio Conejo, son of a former *capellán*. Morelos' mother presented the following case in behalf of her son:

It has been stated and ascertained that the naming of sons and descendants of the brothers of the founder does not exclude the descendants through the direct line. . . . This should take preference over the transverse line regardless of the presence of illegitimacy. . . .

Moreover, the pious founder desired to reward that one of his relatives who was closest to being ordained. . . . This stipulation, emphasized so strongly by the founder, has been met by Bachiller Morelos y Pavón, who by reason of his qualifications was granted at the scheduled time the sacred order of the deaconate, and soon he will receive the priesthood. . . .

None of these circumstances are true of the rival claimants, Rodríguez and Conejo. The first one, not more than twenty-one years of age, has not as yet completed his grammar course, while the second, who is only six years of age, is scarcely old enough to go to school.

In addition, these claimants are descended by the transverse line, and are four generations removed from the founder; therefore my son, who is descended through the direct line, should take preference over them. . . .⁴²

In spite of Juana Pavón's convincing arguments, the authorities rejected her petition, and the coveted property remained in the hands of Rodríguez Carnero until his death in 1804, when another struggle for possession was precipitated. It would be interesting to know if the racial factor was an obstacle blocking Morelos in his efforts to secure the inheritance.

Meanwhile, on December 20, 1797, the Bishop of Michoacán approved Morelos' request for the priesthood, declaring that the candidate's aptitude and fitness had been determined by examination, and that he had taken the spiritual exercises and fulfilled all conditions set forth by the Council of Trent.⁴³ Morelos was accordingly appointed to the priesthood on the following day and shortly afterward was granted licenses to celebrate mass, hear

confession, and preach in Uruapan and neighboring curacies.⁴⁴

Morelos did not remain in Uruapan long. On January 31, 1798, he was assigned as *cura interino* to the parish of Tamácuaro de la Aguacana in the district of Churumuco.⁴⁵ Located in the heart of the *tierra caliente*, the assignment has been described as in "the hottest and perhaps the most miserable of all Michoacán pueblos,"⁴⁶ but Morelos wrote that he accepted the position with rejoicing, and promised to devote his life to the "cultivation of the vineyard of the Lord and in obedience to His Illustrious Majesty, who had so graciously chosen humble persons for great undertakings."⁴⁷ Shortly afterward, Morelos, accompanied by his mother and sister, set out for the new assignment.

The contrast between the Pátzcuaro-Uruapan region and the *tierra caliente* to the south almost defies description. The traveler leaves one world and enters another as he descends from the cool, green, scenic, mountainous area around Pátzcuaro southward to Tacámbaro, into a hot, barren, unproductive region which still repels civilization. It is significant that even today there are no roads south of Tacámbaro worthy of the name, and that travel is possible only by jeep or mule-back. The Indians of the area live as they have for centuries, eke out an existence somehow, receiving from the Río de las Balsas, which flows through the area, some small relief from the heat, the dirt, and the bad odors.

For almost a year Morelos remained at Churumuco in faithful and conscientious performance of his duties. His mother, however, fell ill from the intense heat, and when her condition failed to improve, Morelos sent her and his sister back to Valladolid. In time, he received news that his family had reached Pátzcuaro, but that his mother was so near death that a member of the family had already gone to look for wax to be used for her last rites.⁴⁸ Shortly afterward, on January 5, 1799, Juana Pavón died in Pátzcuaro, and was buried in that town.⁴⁹ She was by far the greatest single influence on Morelos during the first thirty-five years of his life.

Just before his mother's death Morelos wrote the bishop requesting that he be assigned to a parish in a cooler climate, inasmuch as he had heard that Cura Eugenio Reyes Arroyo had been appointed to the parish of Churumuco, and the heat of the *tierra caliente* had caused his mother to become so seriously ill that she was not expected to recover.⁵⁰ Word was received from the bishop, perhaps in March, 1799, ordering an exchange of curacies by which Reyes Arroyo was assigned to Churumuco, and Morelos was appointed *cura* and *juez eclesiástico* of the parish of Carácuaro, some thirty miles to the east. His request for a cooler climate had either been ignored or rejected; but in dutiful compliance with orders, Morelos shortly afterward departed for his new assignment.

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THE EARLY YEARS

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THE CURA OF CARACUARO

THE APOSTOLIC Roman Catholic Church was the most important and powerful institution in colonial New Spain. Its elaborate administrative hierarchy and organization, its doctrine and dogma, and its sacramental system, as developed by medieval European civilization, were transplanted by Spanish ecclesiastics who accompanied and followed the conquistadors to the New World and were firmly established. Dedicated clergy, regular and secular, came in the wake of Hernando Cortez, broke down frontiers, built churches and missions, and spread the faith with great zeal. As a moral and spiritual force, as an institution of property and wealth, and as a guardian of orthodoxy, political and religious, the Catholic church exercised a dominion over the hearts, minds, and lives of Spain's New World subjects that remained unchallenged and unequalled in colonial times.

Social inequalities existed within church organization, as indeed they did within colonial society generally. The upper clergy, which included for the most part the archbishops and bishops, were born in Spain of aristocratic and influential families. They received the most lucrative positions, the highest salaries, the greatest number of favors and privileges, and they lived in sumptuousness as did their counterparts in Europe. The historian H. H. Bancroft contends that in 1808 all the bishoprics of New Spain with one exception, the greater portion of the canon stalls, and a large number of the rich curacies were in the hands of Spaniards from Europe.¹ On the other hand, the lower clergy in most cases were creoles or mestizos, socially distinct and inferior to the Spanish-born prelates. Lacking the training and education of the Europeans, they usually found the opportunities for favors and preferment limited, and there-

fore received the less lucrative assignments. The renowned traveler and scientist Baron Alexander von Humboldt was extremely distressed to find in Mexico that the annual revenue from a diocese of an archbishop might amount to as much as 130,000 pesos, while there were priests in Indian villages whose income scarcely came to 100 or 120 pesos a year.²

The Bishopric of Michoacán was one of the largest, wealthiest, and most important in New Spain. At the end of the 18th century it contained about 120 curacies, practically all of them administered by the secular branch of the clergy. There were more than 1,000 priests in the bishopric to take care of the spiritual needs of some 400,000 parishioners, of whom about half were Indians.³ The resulting ratio of one priest for every 400 parishioners seemingly would have been satisfactory had it not been for the uneven distribution throughout the diocese. One authority has indicated that there were always 500 ecclesiastics in Michoacán who were without occupation,⁴ most of whom probably were trying to avoid assignment to a post outside the capital. At the same time a shortage of priests almost always existed in the less desirable, more remote, and poorer parishes, with the result that individual priests in the outlying areas frequently had to perform functions and duties ordinarily assigned to several individuals. In all probability, a ratio of one priest for 2,000 or more parishioners was not uncommon.

The *cura*, or village priest, was one of the unsung heroes of colonial times. Humble in his origins, creole or mestizo by birth, and lacking the background, position, and education of his Spanish-born confreres, the *cura* was a conscientious, dedicated soul who had little to look forward to except burdensome duties, meager wages, and uncertain opportunities for advancement. True, a position in the Church was eagerly sought by the more aspiring and ambitious among the lower classes, but the education necessary for the priesthood more often than not involved great financial hardship, and the reward was likely to be a poor, impoverished parish, whose Indian population was backward,

ignorant, and poverty stricken, if not lazy. Obviously, the parish priest in such an environment was the most important person in the community — pastor, doctor, mayor, judge, and jack-of-all trades, all wrapped up into one. His was burdensome, demanding, exhausting work. No one in a position of authority in colonial New Spain knew or understood individual human strengths and weaknesses quite so well as the village *cura*; no one was in closer touch with the people or more intimately acquainted with their problems, their joys, and their sorrows. No wonder that so many of the revolutionary leaders of a later day were those who earlier in their careers had seen service as parish priests!

The Bishop of Michoacán at the end of the 18th century was Antonio de San Miguel, one of the most able and enlightened persons in the history of that office. He had a reputation for benevolence, an interest in the public welfare, and a genuine understanding of basic social and economic problems which was rare among those who held high office in those days. His *Informe* written in 1799 to the king of Spain, which Alexander von Humboldt incorporated into his *Ensayo político sobre el reino de la Nueva España*, is a classic description of social conditions by a keen and understanding observer, and it merits reproduction here:

The population of New Spain is composed of three classes of people — white or Spanish, Indians, and the castes, or mixed. The Spaniards comprise one-tenth of the total number, and nearly all the property and wealth is in their hands. The Indians and the castes cultivate the land, serve the wealthy, and live by manual labor. Because of this a conflict of interests results — a mutual hatred which is developing rapidly between those who have everything and those who have nothing. . . . There is no middle class; one is either rich or miserable, noble or infamous.

The benefits which the laws seek to give the Indians are extremely limited, and it can almost be said that they do more harm than good. . . . The natives do not have individual property, and they are obliged to cultivate the holdings of the community. This method of

cultivation comes to be an even more unbearable task for them because for many years in this area they have almost lost hope of receiving any profit from their labor. . . .

The law prohibits intermarriage between castes; it prohibits the whites from living in the Indian towns; and it prohibits the Indians from living among the Spaniards. Civilization is opposed to this barrier which has been placed between them. . . .

The castes are marked as inferior by law, and they are subjected to the tribute, which places on them an indelible blot. Among the mixed races there are many families which by color and stature could be confused with the Spaniards, but the law scorns them. Although many of them are gifted and are people of good character, they are forced to live in a state of constant irritation against the whites; it is a wonder that their resentment does not move them to vengeance more often.

In the past the *alcaldes mayores* considered themselves to be the only officials with the exclusive privilege of buying and selling in their districts. These usurious officials forced the Indians to buy at arbitrary prices a certain number of beasts of burden, with the result that all the natives fell into debt. On the pretext of making them pay, the *alcaldes mayores* forced the Indians into slavery. With the establishment of the *intendencias*, the *alcaldes* were replaced by the subdelegates, who were forbidden to participate in any sort of commercial activity. But since no salary was paid them the change made the situation worse. The *alcaldes* administered justice with impartiality provided that it did not interfere with their own interests; but the subdelegates, not having any income other than what they can get through graft, believe that they are authorized to use illicit means to provide for themselves. Only on rare occasions can the Indians expect protection and help from the subdelegates. The Indians therefore look to the *curas* for help, with the result that the clergy and the subdelegates live in continuous opposition to one another.

Let it not be said that the fear of punishment is sufficient to preserve peace in these areas — other expedients are necessary. If the new legislation that Spain impatiently awaits does not deal with the condition of the Indians and the people of color, the power of the clergy will not be enough to keep them in submission and respectful of authority, though great is the affection for the church in the hearts of these unhappy people.

The bishop then set forth his recommendations for improving the existing social and economic problems:

Let the hated duty — the personal tribute — be abolished; let the infamous law which brands the people of color be abolished so they may occupy all the civil posts which do not require a special title of nobility; let the communal holdings be distributed among the natives; let a portion of the royal lands be given to the Indians and castes; let there be adopted for Mexico an agrarian law . . . whereby a poor laborer can break up the lands which the large proprietors hold, and which have been uncultivated for centuries to the detriment of the national economy; let the Indians, castes, and whites be given full freedom to live in the towns, which now belong exclusively to only one of these classes; let fixed salaries be provided for all judges and magistrates of a district. I have submitted here the major points on which the happiness of the Mexican people depends.⁵

But the remedial legislation which the bishop sought never came, nor did it come with the establishment of Mexican independence. Solving the problems which the Mexican nation inherited from its colonial past became its great task in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; and it was rare when action was taken by means other than violence and revolution.

The parish of Carácuaro, where Morelos lived and worked as *cura* and *juez eclesiástico* for eleven years beginning in early 1799, was located about thirty miles east of Churumuco near the Río de las Balsas on one of its main tributaries. Founded in 1735,⁶ its location was not appreciably more healthful than that of Churumuco, and it was just as poor, and more heavily populated. A *padrón general* of the Carácuaro parish, drawn up by Eugenio Reyes Arroyo in August, 1798, a few months before the parish was assigned to Morelos, indicates that it had more than 1,800 parishioners,⁷ most of whom lived in one of three towns clustered together near a tributary of the river. Nocupétaro lay about a league to the north of Carácuaro, the two being separated by a river, while Acuyo lay about six leagues to the southeast of Carácuaro.⁸ The remaining parishioners were residents of one of several ranches and haciendas that lay in varying

distances from the towns. To administer sacraments, instruct in doctrine, hear confessions, baptize the infants, marry the young couples, bury the dead, and take care of all the personal needs of so many people spread over such a wide area was almost an impossible task, all combining to explain why Morelos on more than one occasion sent requests for an assistant, and suggested that the size of the jurisdiction be reduced.⁹

The people of the parish supported their priest in a rather distinctive way. Morelos' subsistence for five months of the year was provided by the parishioners of Carácuaro, for five months by those of Nocupétaro, and for the remaining two months by those of Acuyo, since it was smallest and poorest. His monthly salary of twenty-four pesos and three reales was paid by the people through the collection of a special tax called the *tasación* for the support of church officials. In addition, Morelos was provided with a few personal services, such as the use of kitchen utensils, and the help of a messenger boy, a stable boy, and a woman for grinding the corn.¹⁰

Morelos had served in his new assignment only a short time when several of the leading officials of Carácuaro drafted a protest against him. In a letter addressed to the Bishop of Michoacán, the *gobernador* of Carácuaro, the *alcalde*, and others, including several former *gobernadores*, complained of the widespread misery and poverty of the parish, caused not only by natural and climatic forces such as the recent plague, the scarcity of water, the loss of harvests and the resulting high mortality, but also by the severity of the priest and the burdensome taxes which the parishioners had to pay for his support. "He scolds us; he annoys us; and he even mistreats us," they complained. Could he not be maintained, they argued, from the proceeds of the *arancel*, the regular fee assessed by the Church for marriage, confirmation, and burial rites, so that the hated *tasación* could be removed entirely?¹¹

The bishop's office acknowledged receipt of the protest and instructed Morelos to explain. On November 22, 1799, Morelos



THE PRIEST

answered the charges point by point. To begin with, he accused the natives of disobedience, laziness, and insolence, pointing out that their obligation to him for the personal services had not been performed for the past twenty days. Moreover, their description of the mortality, the water scarcity, and the loss of crops were grossly exaggerated, since the poverty, misery, and suffering were largely caused by their lack of effort and willingness to work. All of his salary, he said, was used to buy ecclesiastical necessities such as hoods, oils, trays, and fat for candles, and a small part was spent for food. He insisted that he could not maintain himself solely from what the *arancel* might produce, but he agreed to reduce his own income by one-fourth to ease the tax burden of the people. If the bishop desired additional details, he could write Eugenio Reyes Arroyo, who had been the *cura* of Carácuaro for a number of years and who therefore knew the situation well.¹²

Cura Reyes Arroyo in his report to the bishop upheld Morelos on every point. He said that the Indians of the parish could maintain themselves and their families very easily on profits from the production of salt and a dye known as *cascolote*, but they refused to work, and stayed drunk most of the time. Moreover, all the salary of the *cura* was consumed in maintaining his personal servants and their husbands and wives, who also ate at the parish house. To remove the *tasación* would be a serious mistake and would only make the parishioners more arrogant and disrespectful than before. Only God would ever know, said Reyes Arroyo, how much trouble they caused him while he was their *cura*. Morelos' reply to their complaints was complete and fair, he concluded; but if Morelos desired to relax the rules, it should be only for such time as he held that office. Otherwise, relaxing the rules would be injurious to anyone who might hold that position in the future. When the bishop's office received Reyes Arroyo's defense, it dropped the case entirely.¹³

Another problem that came to Morelos' attention shortly after he took over his duties pertained to the hacienda of Cutzián

with its five hundred residents living within Morelos' ecclesiastical jurisdiction but at a distance of some ten leagues, a full day's journey from Carácuaro. When the owner of the hacienda complained to the bishop about the lack of spiritual care, Morelos was called upon to explain. He replied that a dangerous river made travel to the hacienda difficult in good weather, and that during the rainy season the road was practically impassable. For that reason the first *cura* of Carácuaro, Bachiller Francisco Xavier de Ochoa, left a sum of 8,000 pesos for the construction and maintenance of a chapel there and the support of a chaplain. But the residents of the hacienda had allowed the chapel to fall into disrepair, and the license for a chaplain to celebrate mass and bury the dead had been lost for some time. As a result, the residents of the hacienda had for years been deprived of instruction in Christian doctrine and had been living and dying without the sacraments. Some of the infants had been baptized from time to time by a priest from another jurisdiction, Morelos said, but he warned that if this practice were allowed to continue, serious complications and confusion in ecclesiastical administration would result. Whether Morelos' recommendation for the granting of a new license and appointment of a chaplain to take care of the spiritual needs of the hacienda of Cutzián was approved by the bishop is not clear.¹⁴ In all probability, Morelos himself had to assume the responsibility for the souls of Cutzián.

Some years later, in 1807, Morelos suggested that the two haciendas of Cutzián and Santa Cruz be removed from his jurisdiction and placed within the curacy of Turicato, and that the two ranches of Atijo and Parota, which were a part of the hacienda of Santa Cruz, be put under the jurisdiction of the parish of Churumuco. These changes were necessary, he pointed out, first, because the two haciendas were much closer to the parishes he recommended than they were to Carácuaro; secondly, because during the rainy season three rivers which had to be crossed became so swollen and flooded that travel became

extremely hazardous; and thirdly, because most of the faithful living on the haciendas went to confession and had their children baptized in places like Tacámbaro, Turicato, and Valladolid where they traded. "I can affirm," wrote Morelos, "that I am motivated by no consideration other than what my conscience dictates, because my experience of eight years here has led me to conclude that these haciendas within this curacy can not be administered effectively in view of the conditions I have mentioned. Although provision was made twenty years ago for a chaplain for the hacienda of Cutzián supported by means of an endowment of 8,000 pesos, those souls there have suffered all these years because the *curas* have not been able to carry out the provision, nor have they seen the end of the requests which seek to put this into effect."¹⁵

Morelos' request was submitted to the *promotor fiscal* in Valladolid for his opinion and recommendation. He admitted that there was much justification in the request, but pointed out that the division of the jurisdiction would leave Morelos and his successors without an endowment and would therefore cause irreparable damage to the entire parish; and if the minister should be appointed as the *cura* recommended, there would not be sufficient funds to cover parochial necessities. As a matter of fact, said the *promotor fiscal*, only 3,576 pesos in principal was established in the beginning, and expenses had been so heavy that only 344 pesos remained. Therefore, it was essential that the Carácuaro jurisdiction remain undivided, so that whatever surpluses it produced could be turned over to the *juez de capellanías* to fulfill the pious objectives in greater conformity to the wishes of the original testator.¹⁶ The bishop's office subsequently informed Morelos that his request had been rejected, and that his superiors had ruled against any partition of his jurisdiction such as he had suggested.¹⁷

In 1802 Morelos built a church in Nocupétaro, which he described as measuring 120 varas from east to west and 110 varas from north to south, and which was the best church in

the *tierra caliente*, with the exception of the one at Cutzamala. After the completion of the church, work was started on the cemetery, which was so solidly constructed, he reported, that there was none other like it in the *tierra caliente*, and only very few could match it in the colder regions. To the east of the cemetery were located the houses of the bellman and the grave digger; to the west, near the cemetery was the parish house; to the south at one corner was the old church building, where the cadavers could be placed pending burial; at the other corner was the new church; and nearby was the house of the sacristan. Most of the expenses of construction for these buildings had come out of Morelos' own pocket, and had left him heavily in debt, he said, so that it would be difficult for him to make any changes or additions, should the bishop's office disapprove of what had been done thus far.¹⁸

After the completion of the church Morelos submitted a request for the transfer of the parish capital from Carácuaro to Nocupétaro, pointing out numerous advantages such a change would bring. The climate was less severe at Nocupétaro; it was closer to the geographical center of the parish; there were more facilities in addition to the new church; and the town had a greater number of people — seventy families in all. Morelos then complied with instructions to secure the approval of the territorial judge and the principal officials of the area for the suggested transfer, and all appropriate documents were forwarded to the office of the bishop. The bishop's attorney replied that the request was just and had considerable merit, but that authorization for the change would have to come from the king, the viceroy, or the president of the *audiencia*, in accordance with Law 13, Title 3, Book G of the *Recopilación de las Indias*.¹⁹ The bishop's office recommended approval of the transfer in a letter to the viceroy, but whether that approval was ever granted is not known, since Morelos' correspondence written from 1803 to 1810 was sent from Carácuaro at one time and from Nocupétaro at another. Perhaps Morelos' patience with Spanish colonial

administration, both civil and ecclesiastical, was beginning to wear a little thin.

With regard to Morelos' personal affairs while he was a priest at Carácuaro, the Morelian historian Licenciado Juan de la Torre has written that Morelos, on August 17, 1801, purchased a house in Valladolid from a certain Juan José Martínez for 1,830 pesos, though the historian does not indicate where the money came from nor what use Morelos made of the place in the subsequent years.²⁰ It is probable that after 1807 Morelos rented the house to his sister, María Antonia, who in that year married Miguel Cervantes, a native of Guanajuato. The house had but one story when Morelos bought it, but in periodic trips to Valladolid he added a second story which he completed in 1809.²¹ Properties in Valladolid inherited from his mother, Juana Pavón, were ceded by Morelos and his brother Nicolás to their sister and her husband in a document signed in Nocupétaro, June 20, 1808,²² so that at the time of Morelos' trial in 1815, the house was the only property he owned.²³ It suffered heavy damage during the movement for independence and was confiscated by royalist forces. Placed up for sale at public auction in 1821, it was bought and restored by Morelos' sister and her husband and handed down to their daughter. Today, it is the celebrated "Casa de Morelos," located at the corner of Morelos Sur and Licenciado Soto Saldaña, and is now a national museum where the visitor may view a number of interesting personal effects which belonged to Morelos.

As a result of amorous relations between Morelos and an Indian woman of his parish named Brígida Almonte, there was born on May 15, 1803, the first of several children Morelos recognized at his trial in 1815. In accordance with the established practice of naming illegitimate children after the surname of the mother, this infant was named, and became known to history as, Juan Nepomuceno Almonte. A second child, a daughter, was born in 1809 in Carácuaro of an unknown mother, and was living in Nocupétaro in 1815, according to Morelos' testimony.

A third child was born during the revolutionary period in Oaxaca in 1814, as a result of Morelos' relations with a woman named Francisca Ortiz.²⁴ Moreover, Alfonso Teja Zabre has brought evidence to light which seems to indicate there may have been a fourth child, known as José Victoriano Flores, born in Nocupétaro on September 5, 1808, as a result of Morelos' relations with a woman named María Ramona Galván. Teja Zabre is not entirely convinced of the evidence, however, and warns that in the period after the establishment of independence, it became quite customary for people to submit claims of relationship with national heroes for the purpose of obtaining pensions and hereditary privileges.²⁵ The indiscretions of Morelos, of course, represent flagrant violations of priestly vows, and leave much to be desired in the matter of personal conduct. Yet his case was not an isolated one, and his habits were no worse than those of a considerable number of parish priests of his day. The Church, while uncompromising on matters of doctrine, took a lenient position on the weaknesses of man; and moral laxity among the Spanish clergy was not uncommon in colonial times.

With the death of José Joaquín Rodríguez Carnero in 1804, the *capellanía* which Morelos had been seeking, again became vacant. For a short time, possession of the property was contested between Morelos and José Romualdo Carnero, brother of the deceased *capellán*; but in August, 1805, Morelos, deciding that his rival had the better claim, withdrew, leaving the property to Carnero. The next year, however, the new *capellán* forsook his bachelor status and contracted marriage, thus creating a vacancy once more; so Morelos pressed his claim again. This time there were no rival contestants, and on April 9, 1806, Licenciado Miguel Mendez awarded Morelos the inheritance for which he had been struggling for sixteen years. On September 19, 1809, in Valladolid Morelos took formal possession of the *capellanía*, by that time reduced to 2,764 pesos of principal from the original amount of 4,000 pesos. Some two weeks later, after a bewildering number of deductions for fees, pensions,

alms, and expenses for repairing the *capellán's* house, Morelos received as liquid capital the exact sum of seventy-two pesos and four reales!²⁶ The disappointment must have intensified his general feeling of disgust with ecclesiastical administration.

Morelos' principal means of supplementing his meager income was to develop a livestock business. Not much in detail is known about this activity, but a letter written to Miguel Cervantes, his brother-in-law, dated October 14, 1810, discloses that Morelos had a large ranch suitable for raising bulls, cows, goats, and hogs, and that he had been able to find buyers for his stock in Valladolid. It had become necessary to augment his income in this way, he explained, because the parochial fees due him were still unpaid, and there had been such a shortage of food that frequently his meals consisted only of corn.²⁷

Such was the daily life of the *cura* of Carácuaro, as the monotonous routine of one day gave way to that of another. Apparently Morelos was destined to live out the rest of his time isolated in the remoteness of the *tierra caliente*, outside the main historical stream. Almost surely that would have been his destiny had it not been for one of those strange and sudden developments which can so drastically alter human behavior and patterns of living. On September 16, 1810, Miguel Hidalgo raised the standard of revolt at Dolores. When at length Morelos learned about the aims of the movement, he decided to join. The result for Morelos was a new life and a new career. A priest who otherwise would have remained anonymous thus became a revolutionary who in time would achieve fame and greatness.

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MORELOS OF MEXICO

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REVOLUTIONARY
BEGINNINGS

THE invasion of Spain by the French legions of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1808 was the impulse that set into motion a vast revolutionary movement which led ultimately to the overthrow of the Spanish colonial empire in America and the establishment of independent republics throughout all Spanish America. The venal and immoral Manuel Godoy, prime minister in the government of the weak, vacillating Charles IV, and paramour of the queen, had prepared the way for the Napoleonic invasion of Spain. Opposition to the machinations of Godoy had led to the rise of a court faction which had rallied to the support of Prince Ferdinand, Charles' popular son and heir to the throne. After French troops had overrun Portugal late in 1807, and Napoleon had begun to make demands on Godoy and the king for Spanish territory, they decided to flee to America, as the Portuguese royal family had done. When their plan failed, however, Prince Ferdinand had Godoy seized as a traitor. Two days later, on March 19, 1808, King Charles abdicated the throne of Spain, and the prince became King Ferdinand VII.

This factionalism, treachery, and dissension played directly into the hands of the crafty Emperor of the French, who presently persuaded Charles to retract his abdication, invited father and son to Bayonne on French soil, and forced both to renounce all claims to the Spanish throne. Two months later, in July of 1808, Napoleon's brother Joseph was proclaimed King of Spain. The result was resentment and protestation on a national scale, for Spanish subjects everywhere were virtually unanimous in their denunciations of Joseph as a usurper and in their sympathy

for the dethroned Ferdinand, who was regarded as the unfortunate victim of Godoy's treachery.¹

In New Spain the people rallied to the support of the captive Ferdinand and proclaimed their loyalty to him with great enthusiasm. Only the opportunistic Viceroy of New Spain, José de Iturrigaray, was apprehensive, for the fallen Godoy had been his friend and protector. Iturrigaray made no move at first, preferring to watch and wait for a turn of events which he might use to improve his position. Just then the creole-dominated *ayuntamiento*, or municipal council, of Mexico City declared that a protestation of loyalty to Ferdinand should be publicly rendered, but that during his imprisonment, sovereignty should be transferred to the Viceroyalty of New Spain, to be exercised by the *audiencia*, the *ayuntamiento*, and certain other political bodies. The *audiencia*, or supreme judicial power composed of European Spaniards, indicated surprise at the sudden assumption of authority on the part of the *ayuntamiento* and rejected the proposal, thus bringing to life the age-old conflict between creoles and *gachupines* — that is, between American-born and European-born Spaniards.

In the midst of this confused situation Viceroy Iturrigaray concluded finally that his interests would be served best with the convocation of a junta in New Spain patterned after the one that had been established in the peninsula in Seville and which was attempting to govern Spain during the king's absence. Iturrigaray was convinced that such a junta could be controlled easily and that it could be persuaded without too much difficulty to nominate him as king of an independent New Spain. But the plan was detected by the European Spaniards, who saw in it a threat to their position, and who therefore proceeded to form their own plan for the removal of Iturrigaray from office. On September 15, 1808, a group of Spaniards led by Gabriel Yermo seized the viceroy and threw him into prison. The Spanish party in Mexico City then nominated, without official sanction from the Junta of Seville, an old, decrepit soldier named Pedro de Garibay to be Viceroy of New Spain.

REVOLUTIONARY BEGINNINGS

Viceroy Garibay, however, was unable to cope with the growing unrest and rising tide of opposition to the Spanish party in Mexico City. When the *audiencia* demanded a replacement, the Junta of Seville in July, 1809, nominated as viceroy the Archbishop of Mexico, Francisco Xavier Lizana y Beaumont. He proved to be no more effective than his predecessor in curbing the growing dissatisfaction, which ripened into open revolt in Valladolid in December, 1809. Organized by José María Obeso, captain of the Valladolid militia, and Fray Vicente de Santa María, a Franciscan, the revolt "was the beginning of armed resistance to Spanish sovereignty in New Spain."^a It may be added, parenthetically, that the revolt would not end until the independence of Mexico was finally established in 1821.

The conspiracy called for an uprising in the name of Ferdinand VII against the domination of the Spaniards. The support of some 20,000 Indians was sought by promising them the abolition of the tribute. Details concerning the plan of revolt were dispatched to Pátzcuaro, Querétaro, Zitácuaro, and neighboring communities. The entire Intendancy of Guanajuato was to be carried into open rebellion against the ruling authorities of Mexico. The standard of revolt was to be raised on December 21, 1809.

In spite of all precautions taken by the conspirators, their plans became known to the governmental authorities, who moved swiftly to seize its leaders before the revolt could be launched. The viceroy, attempting to conceal his apprehension, then publicly announced there was no cause for alarm. Although the Valladolid plot had miscarried, the viceroy's fears were well founded, as events of the following year proved. The question which should now be asked is with regard to Morelos' connection, if any, with the Valladolid activities. Did he know of plans being formulated? Did he take part in any way? And what effect, if any, did the plot have on him?

No evidence has come to light as yet to indicate that Morelos was in any way connected with the conspiracy at Valladolid or

that he took any part in the plans. Since he was in that city on several occasions during 1809, constructing the second story on the house which he had purchased in 1807, and since there is documentary evidence indicating he was there during the last two weeks of September and the first week of October in settling the matter of his inheritance, it is possible he could have heard about, or have known about, or at least have been exposed to the plans being formulated. But if he knew of developments, he apparently took no part; and it is unlikely that they had any great effect on him. Carlos María Bustamante relates, in his usual flamboyant, exaggerated way, that after Morelos heard about the arrest of the conspirators, he "firmly resolved to avenge those great outrages and to make war on the enemies of America." "Deciding to work in any way he could against the Spanish," continues Bustamante, "he began to erect fortifications in his curacy, and to build a crude kind of bulwark by digging a pit between two walls, through the middle of which passed the river. Such were his measures by the time he learned of the Grito de Dolores."³ But Bustamante has apparently allowed his strong revolutionary partisanship and admiration for Morelos to run away with him, as there is no other evidence that suggests that the year 1810 in the parish of Carácuaro was anything other than normal, at least to mid-October, when Morelos first learned of the Hidalgo movement.

Meanwhile, in the peninsula the courageous struggle of the Spanish guerrillas against the French armies had taken a turn for the worse. The Junta of Seville, driven in 1809 from the mainland to the Isle of León, had become so unpopular that it had taken steps to dissolve itself and transfer its authority to a regency of five members. That body, in turn, then voted to call into session the Cortes, a traditional Spanish representative institution, but failed to provide colonial representation in the Cortes commensurate with a decree of January 22, 1809, which declared that the Spanish dominions overseas were to be considered as integral parts of the Spanish nation. Reluctantly, the

REVOLUTIONARY BEGINNINGS

regency allowed seven delegates from New Spain to participate in the installation of the Cortes on September 24, 1810, but this concession was hardly enough to quiet opinion in New Spain, which was rapidly moving in the direction of independent thought and action.

In the Viceroyalty of New Spain disgust with the conciliatory policies of Lizana y Beaumont resulted, in February, 1810, in a request for his removal. Accordingly, the Spanish regency appointed as viceroy, Francisco Xavier de Venegas, a distinguished Spanish officer, who assumed the administrative reins in Mexico City on September 14, 1810. Almost immediately he found himself faced with the most formidable revolt Spanish authority in Mexico had yet encountered. The revolutionary flames, which had been so disturbing to Pedro de Garibay and Lizana y Beaumont, and which had never been completely extinguished, had been ignited once again in the Intendency of Guanajuato — this time by the parish priest of Dolores, Miguel Hidalgo.

Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, the initiator of the Mexican independence movement, was born of creole stock near Pénjamo, in the Intendency of Guanajuato, on May 8, 1753. As a boy he worked on his father's hacienda where he developed an interest in agriculture that remained with him the rest of his life. At the age of fourteen Hidalgo enrolled at San Nicolás College in Valladolid to prepare himself for the priesthood. In 1770 he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts at the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico, and three years later, a degree in theology from that institution. Some years afterward, though the exact date is uncertain, Hidalgo was ordained a priest.

Hidalgo's brilliant record at San Nicolás enabled him to return there as a member of the faculty, and in subsequent years he taught theology, Latin, and philosophy. In time he became secretary of the college, then vice-rector, and finally rector in 1790. He may have introduced certain unorthodox and prohibited works into the college curriculum, and although there is no evidence that he was censured by the Holy Office, his reforms

so aroused the animosity of his colleagues and the local clergy that he resigned his position in 1792 to become priest at the remote little village of Colima. Hidalgo was there only a few months, however, when he was transferred to the parish of San Felipe where he remained about ten years. In 1803 he succeeded his elder brother José Joaquín as *cura* of Dolores, in the northern part of Guanajuato. By that time Hidalgo had fallen under the suspicious eye of the Inquisition, and was charged with teaching heretical doctrines, reading prohibited writings, and advocating French revolutionary ideas. The case against him was dismissed for lack of evidence; nevertheless, the charges may have been well founded.

The parish of Dolores, under the guidance of the forceful and active Father Hidalgo, became much more than just a center for religious activities. His interest in agricultural pursuits prompted the development of the silk and wine industries, despite the regulations which outlawed them. A factory for making pottery and bricks was established, together with a tannery, carpenter shop, and blacksmith shop. The parish, moreover, was a social and literary center, where creole intellectuals gathered in the house of the *cura* to discuss the writings of the 18th-century French *philosophes*, and to engage in criticism and denunciation of the existing political and social system. Prominent among Hidalgo's associates were Ignacio Allende, a dashing creole officer and captain of a provincial regiment at San Miguel el Grande between Dolores and Querétaro, and Juan Aldama, a lawyer and captain in the San Miguel regiment. Together with the *corregidor* of Querétaro, Miguel Domínguez, and his wife, Doña María Josefa Ortiz, Allende and Aldama were the guiding spirits in the formation of a new plot against Spanish rule, the center of which was the capital city of Querétaro. It appears that by 1810 Hidalgo was in communication with the Querétaro group, and was holding frequent conversations with Allende on the progress of the plans.

The objective of the conspiracy was the establishment of a

REVOLUTIONARY BEGINNINGS

revolutionary government based on provincial representation which was to rule Mexico in the name of Ferdinand VII but which otherwise was to ignore all allegiance to Spain. A day was set for initiating the revolt, and a general appeal for support was to be directed to all Mexican creoles, Indians, and castes. Every effort was to be made to win over the clergy, but all rich Spaniards and governmental authorities encountered were to be seized. The use of force and violence was to be kept to a minimum, but Allende was to assume command of an insurgent army if strong resistance was met.⁴

There now arises the question of Morelos' involvement, if any, and to what degree, with the Querétaro group preceding the launching of the revolt. Although there has been considerable speculation and controversy among authorities on this point, it is most unlikely that Morelos was involved or was in communication with any of the conspirators, or that he had previous knowledge of their plans. Some writers have fabricated a rather elaborate narrative describing close relations between Hidalgo and Morelos during 1808 and 1809, involving secret correspondence and active plotting for Mexican independence on the part of both men.⁵ The source for such an assertion rests solely on a document the authenticity of which was questioned by the Hidalgo scholar José de la Fuente soon after it first came to light in 1908. It purports to be a letter written by Hidalgo to Morelos, dated September 4, 1810, in which Hidalgo confided that he "has just received information from the Center stating that the coming October 29 has been set for the celebration of a great jubilee." He told about the plans being formulated at Querétaro and referred to an interview between Morelos and himself which was held at the end of July. All those who were involved in the plans, such as Mariano Matamoros, said Hidalgo, were highly enthusiastic and confident that the "great jubilee" would be an unqualified success.⁶

When, however, the document in question was subjected to critical analysis, it failed to pass the test. Historian José de la

Fuente presented virtually incontrovertible evidence in support of his contention that the document was a forgery; and it therefore seems fairly safe to conclude that until more trustworthy evidence is produced to prove otherwise, the likelihood of collusion between Morelos and the Querétaro conspiracy of 1810 was extremely remote.

Sometime in August, 1810, the plan of the conspirators became known to the Spanish officials, including the viceroy himself. The story is told that when this information reached the *corregidor*, Miguel Domínguez, he was forced to arrest one of the conspirators. This news was then relayed by the wife of the *corregidor* to Captain Aldama at San Miguel el Grande on the night of September 15. Then in true Paul Revere fashion, Aldama carried the news that night to Allende and Hidalgo, who were in conference at Dolores. According to the story told by Aldama, the *cura* made a hasty decision, sprang to his feet, and exclaimed: "Gentlemen, we are lost; there is no other recourse than to seize the *gachupines* immediately." The household was awakened, and a small group of some twenty men about daybreak ran from door to door spreading the word around the town. Hidalgo addressed the gathering crowd and gave the battle cry that is proclaimed each year throughout Mexico at midnight of September 15-16, and which forever will be remembered in Mexican history as the Grito de Dolores.

The excited mob moved to the jail and forced the officials to free the prisoners. Spaniards were seized. Weapons that could be found were taken and distributed to the crowd. Hidalgo ordered the church bells to be rung, and as the people gathered in anticipation of an earlier mass than usual, their priest addressed them — but there was no mass that day. Instead, Hidalgo exhorted his listeners to recover the lands of their forefathers which the hated Spaniards had stolen three hundred years before, and to overthrow their treacherous Spanish masters who were about to deliver their country and religion to the French. "Defend your rights," shouted Hidalgo. "Long live our

REVOLUTIONARY BEGINNINGS

Lady of Guadalupe, long live Ferdinand VII, death to bad government, death to the *gachupines*!”⁷

“The Grito de Dolores had gone forth,” Bancroft writes. “The poor and ignorant and down-trodden of this little Indian town proclaim the future independence of a great nation! Enthusiasm rises to religious height, and unarmed as they are, they will follow no matter where, and fight and die no matter how.”⁸ Hidalgo and the rabble band, with numbers swelled to several thousand, set out for San Miguel el Grande. At Atotonilco a picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the patron saint of the Indian population, was taken from the chapel and hoisted to the top of a pole as a symbol of the revolution. San Miguel and Celaya were taken in quick succession, and Guanajuato was subjected to a horrible butchery. As the racial aspects of the movement, Indians versus Spaniards, became more pronounced, protestations of loyalty to Ferdinand became far less meaningful, while “death to the *gachupines*” was understood only as an opportunity for plunder, pillage, and murder.

On October 17 Hidalgo and his army, now increased to 60,000, entered Valladolid, which fell after a feeble resistance. Preparations were now made for an immediate attack on Mexico City. The future success of the revolution seemed assured with the confiscation of 200,000 pesos from the coffers of the cathedral at Valladolid. The army left Valladolid on October 19, passing through Charo, Indaparapeo, and Acambaro. Hidalgo, who had held the title of “Captain-General of America” since the first days of the revolt, was proclaimed Generalissimo on the 22nd. Meanwhile, in Indaparapeo an interview which had an extremely significant effect on the future course of the revolution had been held between two of the greatest personalities the independence movement produced.

Morelos first heard of the Grito de Dolores in the early part of October, 1810. In 1815 he said that he received news in his curacy through Don Rafael Guedea, landlord of the hacienda of Guadalupe, that a revolution had begun in the town of Dolores,

and that Cura Don Miguel Hidalgo was at the head of it.⁹ This report, however, apparently made no great impression on Morelos, for a letter written on October 14 to his brother-in-law in Valladolid refers to the "flying bullets," but gives no indication that he was particularly concerned about them.¹⁰ A few days later, however, as Hidalgo was about to enter Valladolid, Manuel Abad y Queipo, Bishop-elect of Michoacán, ordered Morelos to publish in his curacy the ban of excommunication of Hidalgo and his followers which had been issued on October 13.¹¹ No doubt this edict, which condemned the one whom Morelos remembered as his rector at San Nicolás some eighteen years before, aroused his curiosity to the extent that he "felt compelled to go to Hidalgo and talk with him."¹² Moreover, since Morelos had seen some Europeans fleeing from an insurgent army led by his former rector, he decided to take leave of his parish to obtain more information about these developments.¹³

Apparently Morelos' original intention, in the event that he should join with Hidalgo, was to offer his services as a chaplain. He first called on Mariano Escandón y Llera, the Count of Sierragorda, who was the governor of the miter in Valladolid, explaining that he needed a "portable altar," and possibly a replacement for his parish. Escandón at first tried to dissuade Morelos from joining the movement, but failing in this purpose, replied simply that Morelos should try to avoid as much bloodshed as possible, and that a replacement could be obtained by requesting one from his secretary. Morelos then discovered that Hidalgo had already left Valladolid, and so followed him to Chá-ro, overtook him there, and accompanied him to Indaparapeo.¹⁴

The famous interview between the two men took place on October 20.¹⁵ According to Bustamante, Morelos first offered his services as a chaplain, but Hidalgo, in need of commanders and recognizing a leader when he saw one, persuaded Morelos to take a commission instead.¹⁶ From statements which Morelos made at his trial, together with those contained in a letter he wrote to Hidalgo probably late in 1810, it can be concluded

that the interview lasted for several hours, that the two men had a meal together, and that Hidalgo did most of the talking. Asked to give the reason for the edict of excommunication, Hidalgo replied that an explanation was most difficult for him, inasmuch as Spain was in the hands of the French, and the Europeans in Mexico were contriving with the French, preparing to surrender the kingdom, seize the ecclesiastics and church property, and kill all Americans up to a certain age. He insisted that Americans had found themselves with respect to Spain in the same situation as those Spaniards in the peninsula who opposed French rule. Hidalgo added that the objective of the revolt was independence, that the king's absence from Spain had occasioned it, and that all Americans who wished to join in an effort to save kingdom and religion could do so. Morelos replied that he agreed with the arguments, and that at one time he had heard some lawyers say that a kingdom should be returned to its own people in case its king was absent. Hidalgo then wrote out the following orders: "For the present, I commission in due form Señor Don José María Morelos, Cura of Carácuaro, as my *lugar-teniente* and order him to proceed to the south coast, raise troops, and carry out the verbal instructions which I have given him." These instructions included the collection of arms, reorganization of the government, seizure of Europeans, deportation of their families, confiscation of their property, and, above all, the capture of Acapulco.¹⁷

Morelos returned immediately to Valladolid. When he failed to find Escandón y Llera, the governor of the miter, he left a note explaining that he had tried to find Escondón since early in the morning, but having no time to lose, since he had been commissioned to go to the south coast, he felt obliged to leave a note requesting a replacement for his parish. The next day the secretary appointed José María Méndez to Morelos' parish and gave instructions that notice of the appointment be communicated to Morelos through his brother-in-law, Miguel Cervantes.¹⁸

Why then, it may be asked, did Morelos rather suddenly

decide to break with his past, to abandon the relatively quiet and peaceful life of the parish priest, to embark upon a career of a revolutionary and military commander leading forces against the ruling authorities? The answer would seem to involve a complex set of attitudes, motives, influences, and various other forces which may have been at work. His experience at Carácuaro was hardly a pleasant or satisfying one. Morelos must have felt a growing sense of futility, frustration, and hopelessness, and he may have decided by 1810 that if he was to make a significant contribution in his lifetime he would have to look in another direction. He must have become dissatisfied with, and even resentful of, Spanish officialdom, whether civil or ecclesiastical; and he must have been distrustful of Europeans generally. Thus, Hidalgo's personality, persuasiveness, and explanation of his movement struck a responsive chord, and transformed thoughts, feelings, and attitudes which Morelos had been harboring for some time into revolutionary activity. Hidalgo had convinced Morelos that "his obligation to the party of independence was greater than that to his parish." Morelos joined the revolution, therefore, because "Cura Hidalgo, who had been his rector, said that the cause was just."¹⁹

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REVOLUTIONARY BEGINNINGS

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SPREADING THE REVOLUTION

HAVING been commissioned as *lugar-teniente* by Miguel Hidalgo for the conquest of the Pacific coast and the fortress of Acapulco, Morelos set out from Carácuaro, on October 25, 1810, with approximately a score of poorly armed volunteers.¹ The task which lay ahead was stupendous. For the time being at least, his personal qualities of leadership, his knowledge of the terrain of the *tierra caliente*, and the possible advantage of surprise would have to compensate for his complete lack of military experience and lack of an army, ammunition, and supplies even in their most elementary form. Yet within three weeks' time, the small band moved rapidly through Churumuco and Coahuayutla, and, gathering men and weapons as it advanced, passed on to Zacatula on the coast, and then moved rapidly down the coast through Petatlán, Tecpán, El Zanjón, and Coyuca. Little resistance was encountered, and such opposition as the royalists could offer was swept aside, all weapons and booty of the enemy being seized. On November 12 Morelos' army, numbering more than two thousand men and in possession of several cannon, occupied the town of Aguacatillo, on the outskirts of Acapulco.²

The port of Acapulco, situated on the west side of a magnificent harbor, and well known to travelers from both the United States and Mexico, had been for years one of the strongest garrisons in colonial New Spain. The surrounding towns of El Veladero, La Sabana, Las Cruces, Llano Largo, and Marqués could be garrisoned in case of attack from the land side, and thus served as an outer defense system for the port. The inner defense system was built around a fortress castle, which was situated on the east side of the harbor and was reported to be so impregnable that it could resist a siege indefinitely, provided

the supply lines leading to it could be maintained. The famous Anglo-American adventurer and soldier-of-fortune Peter Ellis Bean, who had just escaped from a Spanish prison there as Morelos' army entered the area, wrote that the fortress castle was built of stone with walls twelve feet thick and had about a hundred guns of the largest caliber.³ Storming and taking this strong point was the task that lay ahead for Morelos and his newly assembled, inexperienced, untried, out-numbered army.

An attempt of the insurgents to scale El Veladero heights on November 13 took an unexpected turn. Since both insurgents and royalists were inexperienced in combat, they ran at the sight of each other, fleeing from the field. Within a few days, however, the desertion of many royalists to the insurgent forces permitted Morelos to occupy the strategically important towns of El Veladero and La Sabana, giving his insurgents a commanding position over the port and enabling them to disrupt the royalist line of communications with the capital. Morelos wrote Hidalgo that he was preparing to lay siege to the fortress, since he lacked sufficient men and ammunition for an immediate and all-out assault.⁴ Although royalist reinforcements attempted to dislodge the insurgents from their hold on Aguacatillo, Morelos anticipated the move, and on January 4, 1811, won a resounding victory at Tres Palos, capturing a vast quantity of military stores.⁵ While Morelos called on the nearby haciendas and villages for men and money, Viceroy Xavier Venegas, who by this time had become thoroughly familiar with the name "Morelos" through the dispatches he had received from his commander at Acapulco, sent additional reinforcements to the royalists. The result was a prolonged stalemate of almost six months' duration.

Both sides resorted to every kind of trickery and device to resolve the deadlock. Morelos conducted clandestine negotiations with a royalist artillery officer named Pepe Gago whereby the fortress was to be surrendered to the insurgents in accordance with a certain prearranged signal. The night of February 7,

Morelos and his army advanced from La Sabana and took a position at Las Iguanas. At four o'clock in the morning the insurgents sighted the signal and advanced toward the fortress in two columns. As they came within range, the guns of the fortress and those of the ships in the harbor released a tremendous volley of fire, whereupon Morelos quickly withdrew to Las Iguanas and laid siege. For nine days he kept up a steady fire, but on February 19, when a royalist sortie captured the greater part of his artillery, he fell back to La Sabana.⁶ Since Morelos was no longer able to prevent the arrival of royalist reinforcements or to interrupt the flow of supplies which were brought in by sea from San Blas, he decided early in May to abandon the attack altogether. Leaving a small force on the El Veladero heights to watch the movement of the royalists, he set out with the main body of his army through the mountain passes to the north.⁷

On May 22 at the hacienda of Chichihualco, Morelos defeated a royalist force and two days later entered Chilpancingo. On the 26th he took Tixtla, where eight cannon and two hundred muskets were captured. Here he remained for two months, strengthening the town's fortifications, enlisting volunteers, appointing commanders, and drilling his men. On August 15 Morelos successfully repulsed a royalist attack, and three days later his forces entered Chilapa, where he remained until the following November.⁸ The capture of Chilapa marked the end of what is generally referred to as Morelos' first campaign, and terminated one year of military operations. Within that time, though the injunction of Hidalgo to capture Acapulco had not been carried out, effective fighting forces had been organized and trained, and strict disciplinary requirements instituted; the major part of the southern coast had been brought under insurgent control; and a deep wedge had been driven into the area to the north between the Sierra Madres and the capital.

During this time a number of outstanding figures rallied to the banner of Morelos. They not only served with distinction

SPREADING THE REVOLUTION

as commanders of Morelos' armies, but also held high office and positions of responsibility, years later, after independence was established. Earliest among the group to offer his services was Hermenegildo Galeana, born of an *hacendado* family of the Tecpán area and grandson of an English buccaneer named Galen who had been shipwrecked on the Pacific coast in the early part of the eighteenth century, and who had settled down to become a prosperous cotton planter. Though illiterate, Galeana possessed exceptional ability and was among the ablest of Morelos' officers. At length he gave his life for the cause in a battle near Coyuca in June, 1814.⁹

The Bravo family was living on the hacienda of Chichihualco when the movement for independence began. The family repeatedly rejected demands of the royalists to take up arms in defense of the government; and when a company of royalists seized and occupied all the haciendas in the Chilpancingo area, the Bravos fled and hid in a cave for several months. According to Carlos María Bustamante, when they received a letter from Morelos inviting them to join his army, they responded by attaching themselves to Galeana's force, which had entered the area in May, 1811.¹⁰ From that time on, five Bravos — Leonardo and his brothers Miguel, Victor, and Maximo, and Leonardo's son Nicolás — served the insurgent cause with distinction, and two of these men laid down their lives. Of the five, Nicolás was the most important, both during the struggle for independence and in the period immediately after it was achieved.

The name of Vicente Guerrero may also be counted among those great leaders who served Morelos and received their first military training from him. Born of humble origins in the Tixtla area, Guerrero probably joined Morelos in 1810. After Morelos' death in 1815, he became the recognized commander-in-chief of the insurgent forces and the heir to the Hidalgo-Morelos program of reform. With the royalist commander Agustín Iturbide, Guerrero negotiated the celebrated Plan de Iguala of February 24, 1821, which called for the independence of Mexico, though

on terms vastly different from those Morelos had envisaged. Guerrero later became constitutional president of the Mexican nation.¹¹

Perhaps the ablest of Morelos' commanders, with the possible exception of Hermenegildo Galeana, was Mariano Matamoros. He was serving as *cura* of Jantetelco in the jurisdiction of Cuernavaca when the revolution broke out, but left his curacy to join the insurgent cause as Morelos' force neared Izúcar. He rose rapidly because of his fighting ability, becoming in July, 1813 a *teniente-general* and second in command to Morelos. In early 1814 he was captured, given a speedy trial, and executed on February 3 in Valladolid.¹²

Another name deserving mention among those who served under the leadership of Morelos and who attained prominence in Mexican politics later was Manuel Félix Fernández, better known by his impressive pseudonym, Guadalupe Victoria. He was an able leader and a man of great courage; more than once he saved Morelos' life. He went into hiding after Morelos' death, when the revolution was all but extinguished. He survived somehow and later became the first constitutional president of the Mexican republic.¹³

One Anglo-American, Peter Ellis Bean, should be included among those who joined the Morelos movement during its first year of military operations and who contributed significantly to the cause. Soldier-of-fortune and cosmopolitan adventurer, Bean had come to Mexico as a member of the ill-fated Philip Nolan expedition that entered Texas in 1800. Taken captive and imprisoned by Spanish authorities, Bean escaped as Morelos entered the Acapulco area, joined his insurgent army, and aided the revolutionaries immeasurably through his knowledge of the manufacture of gunpowder. "As there were large quantities of saltpeter in the country," wrote Bean, "and I was the only one who understood the manufacture of powder, I set up a powder mill. We obtained sulphur from a mine near Chilpancingo, and while the Indian women ground the material on their *metates*,

I made the powder."¹⁴ Bean remained with Morelos until 1814, when he was sent to the United States to obtain aid for the insurgent cause.¹⁵

In building an effective fighting force Morelos believed that a well-drilled, disciplined army of between two and three thousand, which could be trained to strike hard and fast, move quickly, harass the enemy, and make the fullest use of guerrilla tactics, would be far more productive of results than a large, unruly, unmanageable mob, such as Hidalgo used. Morelos felt that promotion should be based on performance and merit. Officers who lacked leadership and courage, or who permitted their men to plunder, he regarded as unfit for responsibility. Such were to be deprived of their commands and sent home. Morelos also prescribed the death penalty for anyone, officer or enlisted man, found guilty of insubordination, disobedience, cowardice, treason, "or any disturbance which is opposed to the law of God, the peace of the kingdom, and the progress of our arms."¹⁶

Evidence that Morelos meant what he said about treasonable activity within the ranks of the insurgent forces was his handling of the so-called David-Tabares affair. In early summer, 1811, Morelos commissioned two men to undertake a trip to the north for the purpose of negotiating a treaty of alliance with the United States. One was David Faro, a survivor like Peter Ellis Bean of the Nolan expedition; the other was a man named Mariano Tabares. On the way north they were stopped by Ignacio López Rayón, who explained that he had assumed the headship of the Hidalgo insurrection, inasmuch as royalist forces had captured that leader. Rayón gave both men commissions, but he ordered them to return to the south. At Chilapa, Faro and Tabares encountered Morelos, who refused to recognize their commissions, whereupon the two men, disappointed and despondent, retired to El Veladero and made plans to incite the Negroes in Morelos' army to slaughter the whites. When Morelos heard about this activity, he struck hard and fast. Taking

a small escort with him, he rushed southward to "remove the cancer," crushed the revolt before it could be launched, and caught and shot the leaders.¹⁷

Reporting on the progress of his military operations, Morelos wrote in August, 1811, that he had four battallions under arms — one protecting the coastal ports, one at El Veladero outside Acapulco, and one each at Tixtla and Chilpancingo, guarding the gunpowder supply and making preparations for continuing the campaign.

I place my confidence in these troops, [he said] for they have been selected with my approval. . . . Supporting our cause are the natives of fifty towns. They number several thousand, and while they are not disciplined, they can serve well in a subordinate capacity. I have therefore sent these men back to their fields for the purpose of sustaining the troops. I have a corresponding number under arms and more than fifty cannon of various calibers. I have hurled forth my call to freedom in Cuautla de Amilpas, Puebla, and Oaxaca; and since these towns will respond immediately when the cultivation of the fields is completed, I have no doubt about the progress of our movement in those provinces.¹⁸

For the purpose of financing the insurgent military effort Morelos decreed in November, 1810, that in the area lying under his control the tobacco monopoly and the *alcabala*, or sales tax, would continue in force. An American (Mexican) was to be under no obligation to pay a debt owed to a European, but those debts owed by Europeans to Americans were to be collected immediately.¹⁹ Moreover, Morelos called upon the wealthy landowners for contributions and loans, and exhorted the people to give as much as they could. Tax officials were appointed to collect existing governmental revenues for financing the revolution; and all goods, arms, provisions, and properties that belonged to Europeans were to be confiscated and used to support the insurgent armies.²⁰ Steps were taken to provide a new currency, with the issuance of copper coins which were to serve as a temporary medium of exchange, to be redeemable later at face value in gold or silver currency. Sufficient quantities

of copper were available to the insurgent government in the Tecpán area, but copper was the only metal used at first for coinage purposes in view of the scarcity of all other metals.²¹ Morelos also made an effort to improve the communications of the insurgents when he established on September 15, 1811, a mail service connecting Chilapa with Pátzcuaro, and the latter with Zitácuaro, where Ignacio Rayón had set up a revolutionary government. The mail facilities would be expanded, Morelos declared, as the revolution progressed.²²

While organizing an effective fighting machine and conquering the greater part of the southern coast and south-central interior, Morelos was forging a far-reaching program of political and social reform. At Aguacatillo on November 17, 1810, less than a month after he began his first campaign, he proclaimed what he called "a new government, by which all inhabitants, except *gachupines*, [would] no longer be designated as Indians, mulattoes, or castes, but all [would be] known as Americans." In the same proclamation he decreed the abolition of slavery, of the tribute, and of communal treasury chests. The Indians were to retain the income from the lands on which they lived and worked.²³ As a recent author has written, "It was one of the most important documents in the social history of Latin America."²⁴ The revolution was justified, Morelos insisted, because the perfidious *gachupines* were the enemies of mankind, who for three centuries had enslaved and subjugated the native population, stifled the natural development of the kingdom, squandered its wealth and resources, and violated the sacred cult. Now since Spain was in the hands of the French, Morelos declared, and the *gachupines* were conspiring with Bonaparte to perpetuate their power, all Americans must unite in defense of country and religion.²⁵

Morelos made a special appeal to the creoles. Those who would cooperate and support the movement would be entrusted with positions of the greatest responsibility in the government and in the army, and their property and wealth would be re-

spected. On the other hand, those creoles who were reluctant to join with the insurgents were to be treated as *gachupines*, liable to a firing squad if captured, and their property was to be confiscated.²⁶

With regard to the situation in Spain, Morelos made his position clear. "Now there is no Spain," he wrote in 1811, "because the French are in control of it. There is no Ferdinand VII, because either he went to France voluntarily (and in that case, we are not obligated to recognize him as king), or he was carried away by force and no longer exists as king. Even if he should be living, it is lawful for a conquered kingdom to be reconquered, and for an obedient kingdom to repudiate a king when he is so oppressive with his laws that they become intolerable."²⁷ At another time Morelos made the point that since Ferdinand was a prisoner in France and at the mercy of the despotic Bonaparte, the inhabitants of New Spain were justified in ruling themselves, because "when kings are absent, sovereignty resides in the nation, which is free to form the type of government which it desires. No nation is obligated to remain a slave of another."²⁸

The source for these interesting political and social ideas was most likely Miguel Hidalgo. The Hidalgo movement late in 1810 was strongly inclined to place a greater emphasis on independence and less on Ferdinand VII. Also there was a striking coincidence between the respective social programs of Hidalgo and Morelos, both as to content and timing. Yet there was considerable originality in Morelos' program, the most conspicuous feature being his novel use of the term "American," with a new emphasis on nationality as the chief criterion for an individual's place in the new order, instead of racial composition or social status. Moreover, there would be noticeably more originality and independence in Morelos' thought as the fortunes of the Hidalgo revolution declined in 1811. Because Morelos emphasized the role of the native-born, and did not allow his movement to degenerate into that of an undisciplined Indian horde as Hidalgo had permitted his, respectable Mexican creoles

found the program of Morelos much more attractive than that of Hidalgo.

There was also the painful and delicate subject of Morelos' relations with the Church and the problem of reconciling the revolution with religion. Since Church and State were so inextricably linked in the Spanish colonial system, a priest who took up arms against the government would inevitably be charged with heresy. Thus, the bishop of Oaxaca in 1811 exhorted his parishioners to defend their persons, lives, and treasures from the bandit army commanded by the "traitorous and sacrilegious Morelos," whose desire was to "profane the sacred faith and introduce confusion, disorder, and tyranny."²⁹ Morelos' reply was that he had no quarrel with religion; that the revolution was actually being waged in defense of it; that the conflict was motivated not by any controversy over dogma or doctrine but only by a sincere desire to free Mexico from the political, social, and economic domination of the Europeans, who had usurped the rights of the people for so long.³⁰ And so the controversy raged. It was not the first time by any means that Morelos was involved in a dispute with the ecclesiastical authorities, nor was it his last.

A recent investigation of the role of the clergy in the movement for Mexican independence indicates that the upper clergy were to a large extent loyal to the established system and opposed to independence, while the lower clergy divided sharply in their reactions to the rebellion. Many of the latter remained loyal, and a majority were probably neutral in the struggle; yet an important segment joined the insurrection and played a role of greater significance than their numbers would indicate. They filled the military commands, contributed greatly to activities concerned with press and propaganda, and soothed the consciences of their ignorant countrymen when the decree of excommunication was hurled against them. "Had the lower clergy opposed *en masse*," says a recent study, "the rebellion of 1810 would have been only a minor affair, and the whole course of

the Mexican movement for independence would have been changed."³¹

One of the harshest denunciations Morelos received came from the pen of Manuel Ignacio Campillo, Bishop of Puebla, native of that city and the only creole bishop in New Spain, in a letter, dated November 14, 1811. "Your conduct," wrote the bishop, "is certainly not that of a priest of the New Testament. Instead of leading souls to heaven, you are sending thousands to hell." He then accused Morelos of having imprisoned and mistreated various fellow priests, of administering the sacraments and making appointments without the bishop's permission, and of adding sacrilege to bloodshed. The bishop continued:

When I try to calculate the crimes provoked by the insurgents, my imagination is overwhelmed, and I see only an ocean of crime and sin, in which you are submerged. . . . What if you succeed in all your plans? What if you establish the independence of America? What if you finish with the Europeans and make this realm the most prosperous empire in the world? What will all these advantages and this glory serve you in the next life? In that place, political considerations and temporal advantages mean nothing.

When you are locked up in a jail and are about to ascend an ignominious scaffold like Hidalgo, or when you are stretched out upon a bed a few moments before you take your last breath, you will see the horror of the deeds which you are now committing, although you do not now recognize them because of the blindness which the exaltation of your passions has wrought upon your reason.³²

In his reply, Morelos declared that the clergy he had imprisoned had been confined only because of their opposition to the revolution, and that they were receiving good treatment. The sacraments, he said, were being administered only in cases of necessity, and marriages were still awaiting the episcopal dispensation. He added that one of his most bitter enemies, Manuel Abad y Queipo, Bishop-elect of Michoacán, had granted dispensations to the insurgents of Atoyac. He continued:

Your Excellency has declared that independence is still a political problem, and I should add that the necessary means for prosecuting the present war can also be defended on this hypothesis. Would to

SPREADING THE REVOLUTION

God that Your Excellency might take up the pen to defend it in favor of the Americans! You would, without doubt, find greater reasons for it than that of the Anglo-Americans or the people of Isreal. The justice of our cause is *per se nota*. . . . The truth is, Illustrious Sir, that Your Excellency has done us small favor in your manifestoes, for in them you have done nothing more than to blacken our conduct, conceal our rights, and praise the Europeans — a great dishonor to the nation and its armies. . . . For myself, it would be easier to apply to Rome for a dispensation after the war than to survive the guillotine, and to preserve religion with more purity among my countrymen than among the French and other foreigners. The people will not lay down their arms until the task is done.³³

Thus, religion, while serving as the instrument of both parties and their causes, was not in itself an issue. Morelos had no quarrel with the Catholic church, its hierarchical system, or its doctrine. As a matter of fact, he considered himself as playing a role of champion and defender of the faith. His attack was directed against the European clergy. The basis of his rebellion against their authority was political, social, and national, rather than religious. Almost all members of the lower clergy who joined and participated in the struggle for independence viewed the issue of revolution and religion in the same light.

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MORELOS OF MEXICO

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THE RAYON MOVEMENT

WHILE Morelos was engaged in organizing an insurgent army and spreading the revolution in the south, important developments were taking place in the region to the north involving the fortunes of the initiator of independence, Miguel Hidalgo. His army, it will be remembered, had left Valladolid in the latter part of October, 1810, with Mexico City as its objective. There was still much confusion within insurgent ranks as to the motive of the revolt, but there was a tendency to emphasize independence more and Ferdinand VII less as the movement progressed; in fact, for a while both were proclaimed simultaneously!¹

To check the advance of Hidalgo, Viceroy Venegas, concerned as much about his head as his office, dispatched the loyal but unpopular royalist commander, Torcuato Trujillo. The two armies met at Monte de las Cruces and in the terrifying battle which followed, Trujillo suffered such heavy losses that he was forced to retreat to the capital. Although he claimed a great victory, his reception was noticeably lacking in enthusiasm, and the viceroy seriously contemplated flight to Vera Cruz. On the other hand Hidalgo gave the order to retreat, although Allende strongly urged that the march on the capital be pressed. The usual explanation, and the one Hidalgo gave to Rayón, is that he had decided that his own forces were inadequate for the penetration of the capital's defenses, in view of the heavy losses of personnel and military equipment at Monte de las Cruces. But Hidalgo had told Morelos that although his ammunition supply was depleted, there would be "no delay in approaching Mexico City with forces that would make the enemy tremble."²

While the battle of Monte de las Cruces was being fought,

a royalist force under the command of Félix María Calleja occupied Querétaro. Calleja, who would become Morelos' foremost adversary as a royalist commander and later as successor to Viceroy Venegas, was arrogant, suspicious, vain, ruthless, cruel, but easily the most competent and effective of the viceroy's generals. Ordered by Venegas to reinforce the capital's defenses, Calleja set out by way of Aculco, while Hidalgo was falling back to the same place, not knowing that the royalists had recaptured Querétaro. The two armies, ignorant of the other's approach, met near Aculco on November 6, and the royalists won a decisive victory. The insurgents retreated to Guadalajara, while Calleja entered Guanajuato, where in characteristic fashion he made the most determined effort to avenge Hidalgo's slaughter of Spaniards two months before.

At Guadalajara, Hidalgo proclaimed several reforms and undertook the organization of a revolutionary government. In a series of decrees issued in late November and early December, 1810, he emancipated the slaves, abolished the tribute, restored communal lands to the Indians, prohibited pillage, removed existing restrictions on the production of wine and tobacco, and imposed a tax on certain agricultural products to obtain revenue for the revolutionary government. Two ministerial posts were created: José María Chico, a young Guanajuato lawyer, was appointed head of the department of justice, and Ignacio Rayón, Hidalgo's personal secretary, became secretary of state. For the dissemination of information and propaganda, an insurgent paper was established, *El Despertador Americano*; and Pascasio Ortiz de Letona was appointed as envoy plenipotentiary to the United States to seek aid and treaties of alliance and commerce. Unfortunately for the insurgent cause, Letona was apprehended before he left the country and took poison to escape execution.

Receiving information on January 13, 1811, that an army under Calleja was approaching Guadalajara, Hidalgo organized his defenses outside the city at the bridge of Calderón. The two armies met in a great battle, described as one "between quantity

and quality, between courage and discipline, between heart and head."³ On several occasions it appeared that victory was within grasp of the insurgents, but when a fire accidentally broke out in the midst of their ranks, the entire army, terrified and panic-stricken, fled in the utmost confusion and disorder. "It was an accident," says Bancroft, "which overruled the power of battle and held back the cause of independence for eleven tedious and bloody years."⁴ Calleja entered Guadalajara in triumph, and Hidalgo and the remnants of his army fled to the north.

As the broken insurgent army retreated northward, the breach which had been developing slowly but steadily between Hidalgo and Allende broke into the open. Hidalgo was forced to transfer his authority to Allende, who led the retreating army through Saltillo northward in the direction of Monclova. On the morning of March 21 as the group trudged onward toward Texas, it was suddenly set upon by a force commanded by Ignacio Elizondo, who only recently had betrayed the insurgents because of a quarrel with Allende, and all of the leaders were captured, including Hidalgo himself. "Never was a plot more perfidiously planned or more successfully accomplished."⁵

The captive insurgents were led over the long, dusty trail to Chihuahua, where they were given a speedy trial, condemned, and, with the exception of one prisoner who received life imprisonment, all were sentenced to die. Hidalgo conducted himself with extreme dignity and fortitude throughout the agonizing proceedings before the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and assumed full responsibility for leading the insurrection. He declared that his purpose was the independence of Mexico, and that he was attempting to preserve its institutions from the French. He never had an opportunity to devise a form of government, he said, and he was still a devout Roman Catholic, as he had always been. But before the military court could pass sentence, canonical law required that he must first be degraded from the priesthood. On July 29 the ceremony of degradation was performed, and shortly after, the sentence of death was

pronounced against him. Two days later a firing squad carried out the order. The authenticity of the recantation supposedly written by Hidalgo in which he sought forgiveness for the evil, the destruction, and the bloodshed he had caused, is still a subject of debate; and the truth about Hidalgo's sentiments during his last days may never be known. His revolution accomplished but little, because his talents and genius lay in the realm of the idealistic, the emotional, and the inspirational, rather than in the practical, the administrative, or the military. But as the initiator of the movement which subsequently brought independence, his claim to the title of "Father of Mexican Independence" is fully deserved. It has been said that without Hidalgo there would have been no Agustín Iturbide; for strangely enough, although he helped defeat Hidalgo, by a peculiar turn of events he later effected the independence of Mexico which Hidalgo initiated. It may be added that without Hidalgo there would have been no Morelos.

After the capture and execution of Hidalgo and his associates, the leadership of the movement passed to Ignacio López Rayón, a man of moderate attainment, but lacking Hidalgo's idealism and humanitarianism and Morelos' qualities of leadership and devotion. Born in Tlalpujahua, Michoacán, in 1773, Rayón studied philosophy in Valladolid and received a law degree from the College of San Ildefonso in Mexico City. For a short time he practiced law, but was engaged in mining operations near the town of his birth when he joined the Hidalgo movement soon after the Grito.⁶ He became Hidalgo's personal secretary and fought in all major engagements against the royalists. Elevated to the position of secretary of state, Rayón apparently was the originator of the idea of the Letona mission. As the Hidalgo group retreated northward from Guadalajara, a special military tribunal of the principal insurgent officers met in Saltillo and appointed Rayón commander-in-chief, while the others departed on a journey to the United States in search of aid and supplies.⁷ But with the news of the capture of the insurgent

leaders and the approach of royalist forces, Rayón abandoned Saltillo, and at length, after a long and difficult march, he and his force arrived at Zacatecas, where he began organizing a provincial government, training soldiers, and extracting metals from the nearby mines.

From that point, apparently in the hope of effecting a reconciliation with Calleja, Rayón and his second-in-command, José María Liceaga, wrote a letter to the royalist commander on April 22, 1811, explaining the nature and motive of the insurgent revolution, and inviting his support and cooperation in the establishment of a national junta. It was to be modeled after the one in the peninsula: it would govern the country in the name of Ferdinand VII, and would protect the kingdom and its institutions from French conquest.⁸ Calleja, however, flatly rejected the offer, replying that he would not welcome further communications from the insurgents. The only basis for reconciliation acceptable to him, he explained, was for the insurgents to surrender all arms, ammunition, and funds, and receive the benefits of a general pardon. These conditions Rayón refused. As he heard of Calleja's approach, he evacuated Zacatecas, retired southward to the mountain retreat of Zitácuaro, which lay about midway between Valladolid and Mexico City, and proceeded during the summer of 1811 with the organization of his national junta.

On July 13 Rayón wrote Morelos, explaining the need for greater cooperation among the insurgent chiefs and the desirability of centralizing authority for checking the anarchy which prevailed. Such ends could be accomplished, Rayón pointed out, through the formation of a national junta, which would unify and coordinate the insurgent effort. Morelos, having received news of Hidalgo's capture through intercepted letters, and likewise seeing the need for centralized authority, replied to Rayón that he was in accord. "It appears that we are of the same opinion," wrote Morelos, "on the formation of the junta. . . . No doubt in the beginning of the struggle it was necessary to

hand out numerous commissions to augment the leaven, but it is now time to knead bread. . . . Since I am unable to leave here even for a moment, I am naming [José] Sixto Verduzco, *cura* of Tuzantla, as my representative in the junta." Morelos closed his letter with an admonition: "It would be inadvisable to have more than three members in the junta because it is not easy to develop a republic with the rule of many."⁹

With this endorsement of his plan, Rayón, on August 19, called a meeting of the inhabitants and landowners of the Zitácuaro area, who voted in assembly to authorize the establishment of a junta of three members, to be increased to five if circumstances required. The assembly then decided that Rayón and a group of his associates, including José María Liceaga, José Sixto Verduzco, six high-ranking officers, and four prominent officials, were to select the members and install the junta. To the surprise of no one, Rayón, Liceaga, and Verduzco received the greatest number of votes and were therefore declared elected. Other insurgents received as many as four votes, and even Morelos received one. Rayón obviously dominated all the proceedings at Zitácuaro, and the formalities which he and his associates resorted to were largely in the nature of window dressing to give the election an aspect of legality. With the taking of an oath by the members to defend king and church, the new insurgent government, which was called the Supreme National Junta, was formally installed. Rayón assumed the title of "President of the Supreme Junta and Universal Minister of the Nation."¹⁰

Although Rayón's associates enthusiastically received the junta, many other insurgent leaders, including Morelos, objected to it. Some refused to recognize its authority; others simply ignored it. Morelos thought the titles that Rayón assumed were ridiculous imitations of those in the peninsula, but his main objection to the junta was the allegiance it paid to Ferdinand VII.¹¹ To this charge, Rayón and his colleagues promptly countered that for reasons of expediency — to win Europeans, creoles, and

any others who might be reluctant to rebel against the king — the decision had been made to use his name. "Our plans are those of independence," declared the junta in a letter which since has become one of the best known of the independence period, "but we insist that the use of the name of Ferdinand VII will do us no harm."¹² Morelos thereupon agreed to give the junta his support, though rejecting Rayón's offer to serve as a fourth member. Moreover, on hearing that Calleja was preparing to attack Zitácuaro, Morelos declared that he was determined to risk his life to uphold the authority and existence of the Supreme Junta, and that "the security of the three persons who composed the junta was of the greatest importance, inasmuch as their destruction was the enemy's major objective."¹³ Morelos might not be in agreement with the junta's principles, nor even on very cordial terms with its members, but so long as it was the target of Félix María Calleja, he was willing to support it.

About the middle of November, 1811, Morelos began what has usually been called his second campaign. He hoped ultimately to take Mexico City and Puebla, but his immediate objectives were to extend the revolution in the area north of the capital and to distract enemy forces threatening Zitácuaro. In late November after Morelos took Tlapa, he received a report that the viceroy was as frightened as a "scared rooster," and was contemplating leaving the capital for Vera Cruz.¹⁴ At Chiutla the insurgents engaged a royalist force commanded by Mateo Muzitu, whose hatred of Morelos was so intense that he had cast a special cannon which he named "Mata Morelos."¹⁵ The insurgents took the town by storm, and although the captured Muzitu offered 50,000 pesos to spare his life, he was shot, together with the other Spaniards captured. This execution has led to charges of extreme and needless cruelty on Morelos' part, but it should be remembered that in guerrilla-type operations, neither faction gave any quarter whatever, nor expected it. The inevitable fate of the principal prisoners taken by both

sides was the firing squad; lesser prisoners were confined in a camp near Zacatula where the heat and heavy labor made death just as inevitable but more gradual.

At Chiutla, Morelos divided his forces into three parts: the first, under Miguel Bravo, was to march to the south against Ometepec and occupy the surrounding country; the second, under Galeana, was to attack Taxco to the west; while the third, commanded by Morelos himself, was to move northward, take Izúcar and open the way to Puebla. Taxco and Izúcar soon fell to the insurgents, and Morelos wrote a subordinate that he was preparing to enter Cuautla de las Amilpas where he would formulate plans for attacking the supply lines between Vera Cruz and the capital.¹⁶

Cuautla fell to the insurgents on Christmas day, and although the way to Puebla seemed open, Morelos suddenly turned to the west to join Galeana in Taxco. What was the reason for this move, in view of the almost incalculable advantage the control of such a vital center as Puebla would afford? Morelos later said that he turned the other way because he was worried about a royalist force at Toluca commanded by Rosendo Porlier and the possibility that it might descend on Taxco and recapture the entire area to the south.¹⁷ Whether Morelos' move to the west was to provide at least indirect assistance to the Junta of Zitácuaro, as Bustamante claims, or whether it was simply to confirm insurgent control over the Taxco-Tenango area, as Alamán states, is not very important;¹⁸ but there is at least one Mexican historian who, after a careful study of the strategic possibilities, thinks that Morelos' failure to move in the direction of Puebla at that time constituted one of his greatest military blunders.¹⁹

On January 1, 1812, the day that Morelos entered Taxco, Calleja appeared before Zitácuaro. Apparently the members of the junta were confident that the royalist assault could be successfully resisted. Liceaga wrote that the enemy forces numbered six thousand men, and that their commanders con-

sidered the destruction of Zitácuaro "as the most important task which has confronted them since the beginning of the insurrection." But he added, optimistically, "that we will lose only if God wishes to punish us, because the local situation — our arms, supplies, and the high morale of the people — should give us the victory."²⁰ If Liceaga meant what he said, he was fooling himself; but perhaps he was only trying to bolster his own flagging spirits.

Calleja made elaborate plans for attack, and when all was ready, his forces surrounded the town and began to surge forward from all directions simultaneously, their superior gunnery enabling them to advance almost at will. Zitácuaro was doomed.²¹ Somehow, the junta members effected their escape, and after many difficulties made their way successfully to Tlalchapa and then to Sultepec, which became the new seat for Rayón's insurgent government. The battle of Zitácuaro was a deadly blow for the insurgent cause, and more particularly for Rayón's power and prestige. His officers began to assert their independence, and Rayón found himself no longer able to command the respect of those who formerly had supported him. He wrote that he had become disgusted with his associates and their "childish dispositions and weak characters."²² The 19th-century Mexican historian and statesman José María Luis Mora speculates that if the defenders of Zitácuaro, who enjoyed a situation a thousand times more advantageous than Morelos' forces at Cuautla a short time later, had been able to resist for a month or two, Morelos could have become master of Puebla and perhaps the capital itself.²³ Although the comment may be a bit extreme, it nevertheless is worthy of note.

During the month of January, Morelos and his forces, after driving Porlier back to Toluca, retired eastward by way of Cuernavaca to Cuautla, arriving at the latter town on February 9, 1812.²⁴ Preparations were immediately renewed for the attack on Puebla. Morelos' army, which numbered about three thousand men, including well-trained divisions under the command

of Leonardo Bravo, Hermenegildo Galeana, and Mariano Matamoros, constituted a new and far more formidable menace to the viceregal power than the Junta of Zitácuaro. Once again the Mexican capital became a center of turmoil and confusion, and once again a panic-stricken viceroy called upon his ever-dependable commander, Calleja, to smash the grave new threat only some fifty miles to the south. Here, in a letter to Calleja, is the way the viceroy described the situation:

The capital of Mexico has been encircled by gangs of bandits, who have interrupted communications, mail facilities, and supply lines from all directions. . . . The occupation of Querétaro has obstructed trade with the interior, and it is absolutely impossible to ship quicksilver and gunpowder, and the other products of the mines which are so indispensable to our manufacturing processes. The most distressing privation has resulted in the provinces of Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, Zacatecas, Nueva Galicia, and others in the interior. . . . The towns in the vicinity of Valladolid interrupt communications and trade from that city to this. . . . Worse still is the road from Puebla. The rebels in considerable force have occupied many towns and haciendas in that province; they have destroyed everything, and have insulted the unfortunate residents . . . to such an extent that they live in a state of constant anxiety. . . . This same sort of turmoil has caused the greatest difficulty in communicating with Oaxaca and its province; and the same is true of Vera Cruz. . . .

All these evils — the danger of our commerce with Acapulco being interrupted, the impossibility of carrying an overseas trade, the difficulty of shipping goods to the interior, the deprivation of a million pesos which the treasury should have received from a certain shipment, the imminence of the collapse of the port of Vera Cruz to the insurgent forces — all these factors are caused by the person of Morelos, the chief leader of the insurrection, of which he is the guiding genius. . . .

It is then essential to conceive a plan to strike Morelos and his band a smashing blow that will terrorize his followers to such a degree that they will at least desert him, even if they do not seize him.

Their principal occupied points are Izúcar, Cuautla, and Taxco. . . . The plan is to make a simultaneous attack on Izúcar and Cuautla. The operation would be more complete with an attack on Taxco also, but it is undesirable in that it would require further subdivision

THE RAYON MOVEMENT

of forces, and there is not a sufficient number in Toluca for this undertaking.²⁵

Accordingly, the viceroy ordered Calleja and his Army of the Center, reinforced by a division from Puebla, to attack Cuautla and then to return to the capital after Morelos had been dealt a crushing blow. Meanwhile, Morelos, having been advised of Calleja's advance, sent out a call to the junta at Sultepec and to all the troops under his command, including those at Izúcar, Chiautla, Ometepc, Chilpancingo, and Acapulco, to send all the help possible.²⁶ The stage was now set at Cuautla for the showdown between the royalist forces of Calleja and the insurgents under Morelos. All Mexico awaited the outcome. "With the fate of Cuautla," wrote Calleja to the viceroy, "will be decided the fate of this kingdom."²⁷

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8. *Idem to idem, ibid.*
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MORELOS OF MEXICO

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THE CONQUEST OF
THE SOUTH

CUAUTLA de las Amilpas was highly suitable for defense, since it was situated on a rolling plain and surrounded by thick groves of trees growing close to the buildings. The main street ran north and south for about half a league and connected the convents of San Diego and Santo Domingo. A thick wall protected the greater part of the west side of the town, while on the east there flowed a broad, swift river. The insurgents applied themselves with great energy to prepare for the coming attack, fortifying the plazas and convents and digging an elaborate network of trenches to link the main defenses. "Cuautla is fortified with intelligence," reported Calleja, after he had made an initial test of its system of defenses.¹ The best estimate of the number of troops who served with the insurgents is between 4,000 and 4,500, while the royalists had twice that figure after they received reinforcements early in March. But strength in armament was about evenly matched, each side employing from twenty to twenty-five artillery pieces and cannon of various calibers.²

The main attack began on the morning of February 19. The royalists advanced in four columns, but so effective was the insurgent fire, which repulsed charge after charge, that Calleja was forced to withdraw his men in the afternoon after suffering heavy losses. Plans of the royalists had to be revised, and a council of war that night decided that a siege must be laid. "Cuautla is defended with 12,000 men, 2,500 guns, and 30 cannon," reported Calleja with deliberate exaggeration. Great losses would be sustained, he said, and a siege had become necessary, requiring more men, artillery, military stores, ammu-

nition, and time. But Calleja expressed confidence that if the siege could be applied effectively, Morelos could be smashed in six or eight days.³

The royalists began a vigorous bombardment on March 10, with Calleja pounding from the west, and Ciriaco de Llano, who had arrived with reinforcements, from the east. The inhabitants of the town, frightened at first by the downpour of shot and shell, quickly became accustomed to it; and the children found they could earn a few reales for gathering the cannon balls that fell into the streets.⁴ But four days of intensive bombardment brought no appreciable change, and an attempt by the royalists to divert the flow of the river to cut the town's water supply also failed. The morale of the insurgents was still high; communications with the outside were still intact, and Morelos and his leaders still as determined and confident as ever. Morelos took the occasion to taunt his adversary with the following note, written in the middle of the siege:

He who dies for the true religion and for his country, does not die unhappily but gloriously. You, who wish to die for the cause of Napoleon, will end in the same way that is designed for the others. You are not the one who determines the final moment of this army, but rather it is God, who has decided the punishment of the Europeans, and who has declared that the Americans should recover their rights. I am a Catholic, and for that reason, I say to you that you should return to your native country, because in accordance with the circumstances of the war, [victory] will be ours on the day that God decrees. Aside from this, you do not have to worry, because even though this army should be defeated, there still remains all America, which knows its rights and which is determined to destroy all *gachupines*. You no doubt believe that king D. Sebastian will appear on his white horse to help you win the war, but the Americans know better; no longer are you able to deceive them with your false proclamations. I suppose that it will be necessary for an army with trousers to come to help Señor Calleja destroy this courageous division, for the petticoat army he has now has not been able even to enter the outskirts of this town. If the occasion should arise, while I am working in my office, have your army fire some shells at me, because I am lonesome without them.⁵

THE CONQUEST OF THE SOUTH

Meanwhile, within the town the food supply had steadily deteriorated. From captured insurgents Calleja learned that during the month of March the insurgents had an ample supply of bread, corn, beans, and water, though there was a shortage of meat, while by the middle of April, the only sustenance left was corn. Henry G. Ward, who later was British Minister to Mexico, wrote that during the siege "a cat sold for six pesos, a lizard for two, and rats for a peso apiece."⁶ An insurgent prisoner told the royalists that the defenders ate tortillas in the morning, tortillas at noon, and tortillas at night, and that there were from twenty-five to thirty persons dying daily during the last part of April.⁷ At one time there were more than three hundred cases of malnutrition in the Hospital de San Diego alone, and the suffering became more intense each day. Calleja could not hide his admiration, declaring that "their fanaticism compensates for their lack of food." He later added: "If the devotion and activity of the defenders of Cuautla were in behalf of morality and directed to a just cause, they would merit some day a distinguished place in history. . . . This priest is a second Mohammed."⁸

On the other hand the royalists were having their troubles. Calleja complained about the disagreeable climate which had caused the spread of dysentery and endemic fever among the troops; fatigue had gripped the army; the early rains had made a swamp out of his camp site, and had rendered his artillery all but useless; the troops had not been paid because there was a shortage of funds; morale, therefore, was low; and his own health had deteriorated steadily.⁹ So it must have been gratifying to the royalists to receive news that the viceroy had published, on April 1, a general amnesty which had been issued by the Spanish Cortes on the previous November 9, 1811, granting a pardon to those insurgents who would renounce the revolution, lay down their arms, and acknowledge the authority of the viceregal government.¹⁰

Published by Calleja on April 17, this proclamation was re-

ceived by the hard-pressed defenders with great joy. Although there must have been great pressure on Morelos to accept the offer, he considered it a ruse, and rejected it completely. Bustamante says that when Morelos received a copy of the edict, he replied sharply that he was extending equal mercy to Calleja and the other Spaniards.¹¹

Nevertheless, the insurgent position was becoming increasingly untenable. After an attempt to obtain help from Rayón had failed, Morelos decided that the only course left was evacuation. He ordered that preparations be made in great detail. According to plan, the soldiers and the people were mustered in the plaza of San Diego just before midnight of May 1, and at two in the morning the march from the town began. Galeana, commanding a thousand infantrymen, led the advance guard. The Bravos and Morelos led two hundred fifty cavalymen, a corps of troops armed with slings and lances, and the main body of the townspeople; and a Captain Anzures brought up the rear-guard infantry and artillery.¹² The insurgent columns left by the north entrance, cut down the royalist guard posted just outside the gate, and proceeded eastward in such silence that even after they had been on the march for two hours, their movements had escaped detection. Ironically, at that very moment Calleja was writing the viceroy that he was planning to evacuate the place, since his health had deteriorated so greatly.¹³

Not until the insurgent band had crossed the river did the royalists discover what had happened. But in a flash, Llano's cavalry was on the insurgent flank, and Calleja's force was approaching. A fierce battle was fought which lasted more than an hour. Resistance against such overwhelming odds became hopeless; Morelos therefore gave the order to disperse and to rendezvous in Izúcar.¹⁴ The confusion which followed was indescribable: royalists fired on each other; insurgents and defenseless townspeople were cut down by the hundreds; and for a distance of seven leagues the royalists pursued the fleeing insurgents, with the result that the roads were so covered with

THE CONQUEST OF THE SOUTH

cadavers that one could hardly take a step without falling on them.¹⁵ Many lost their way, and families became separated. "Even today," wrote a contemporary in 1826 who had witnessed the event, "there are men and women who are separated from their respective wives and husbands, and who do not know whether or not they are alive."¹⁶ Morelos, who broke two ribs when his horse fell into a ditch, fled in the direction of Zacatepec with an escort of about seventy men. The royalists followed in hot pursuit. Practically the entire escort of Morelos was sacrificed to permit the escape of their chief, who, almost alone, finally reached Izúcar and Chiautla.¹⁷

The most reasoned guess as to the number of insurgents lost is about three thousand, or a thousand less than Calleja reported.¹⁸ A great percentage of the number were unarmed residents of Cuautla rather than troops. Also lost were Morelos' private archive and almost all the insurgent armament, plus considerable territory which the royalists recaptured while the siege was in progress. The greatest loss, however, was the capture of Leonardo Bravo, who was offered his release if he would prevail upon his brothers and his son to abandon the revolution. Leonardo declined the offer and he was executed on September 13.¹⁹

On the other hand, Morelos had not been captured, nor had his army been entirely crushed, although the royalists had spent almost two million pesos in the effort. The viceroy claimed a great victory, but when Calleja returned to the capital on May 16, his reception was far less enthusiastic than that following Zitácuaro. Ward writes that in a comedy which was presented in Mexico City several nights afterward, a soldier was introduced, who on returning from battle gave his general a turban and boasted, "Here is the turban of the Moor, whom I took prisoner." "And the Moor himself?" inquired the general. "Oh, he unfortunately escaped!" Whereupon the audience roared with laughter.²⁰

Thus ended the 72-day siege of Cuautla, a titanic struggle between the forces of the old order and the new — a struggle

which Mexican writers have described as one of the most glorious in the annals of military history. To be sure, Cuautla does not have the historical significance of engagements such as the Alamo, or Verdun, or Corregidor, but like them, it is the embodiment of a courageous and spirited resistance against a relentless and overpowering foe. Historically, Cuautla may be viewed without exaggeration as one of Morelos' most inspired achievements, for he had prevented Calleja from bringing the revolution to a close in 1812. Since Morelos had escaped and continued to remain at large, Viceroy Venegas was forced to announce, with some embarrassment, that the reward which he had been offering for Morelos' capture was still in effect, for he was as determined as ever, he said, "to liberate the world from one of its most hideous monsters."²¹

The insurgents accomplished little in the six months' period following the evacuation of Cuautla, until Morelos took Oaxaca. Most of their military operations were confined to the Tehuacán-Orizaba area, but they never developed an over-all strategy, and their net gains in the area for the rest of the year remained negligible. They recovered several towns south of Cuautla, such as Chilapa, which the insurgents had given up during the siege, only to lose them again when they moved on to another area. Late in July, Morelos was forced to make a diversionary move to the east to rescue a beleaguered insurgent force commanded by Valerio Trujano at Huajuapán, which had been under siege for more than three months. Morelos won a great victory in lifting the siege, and although the way seemed open to Oaxaca, he preferred to move northward instead, arriving at Tehuacán de las Granadas on August 10, where he remained about two months.²²

Early in October, Morelos ordered the valiant Trujano to move in the direction of Puebla. Establishing headquarters at Rancho de la Virgen, about halfway between Tehuacán and Puebla, Trujano was attacked by a royalist force under Satur-nino Samaniego. Trujano fell in battle. A rout would have been

THE CONQUEST OF THE SOUTH

certain had it not been for the arrival of Galeana, who rallied the insurgents, drove the royalists from the field, and carried the body of the fallen hero to Tehuacán, where Morelos ordered it buried with military honors.²³

Morelos himself took the field about the middle of October, setting out to the northwest. He explained to Rayón that he was still thinking of the conquest of Puebla and Vera Cruz, but that his immediate objective was to secure possession of one hundred silver bars which the junta had promised him but which had never been delivered.²⁴ At Ozumba, to the west of Puebla, Morelos recovered the silver, and learned of the proximity of a royalist convoy carrying provisions and ammunition to be used to besiege him in Tehuacán. He also discovered that the royalists had drawn so heavily on the manpower of the area that Orizaba had been left unprotected. After a hasty and unsuccessful attack on the convoy, Morelos marched with all possible speed, attacked Orizaba on October 29, and took it within two hours' time.²⁵ He captured a vast quantity of booty, including cannon, government tobacco, and currency. Morelos distributed some of the tobacco to his soldiers, some to the farmers in the area, and set the rest on fire, boasting that its destruction would deprive the viceroy of funds sufficient to wage war for seven years.²⁶ The claim proved to be exaggerated, however, for it was later revealed that the royalists had succeeded in hiding vast quantities of tobacco which the insurgents had failed to find.²⁷ Leaving Orizaba on October 31 to return to Tehuacán, Morelos and his forces were intercepted and dispersed on the way, but he was able nevertheless to collect his scattered units and make preparations for extending the revolution to the southward.

Thus far in 1812 the insurgents had little to show for their efforts, and the cause of independence was in desperate need of a military victory. Perhaps, as Carlos Bustamante has suggested, it would have been far more advantageous to the insurgents to have made a vigorous and determined effort to attack and dis-



THE SOLDIER

THE CONQUEST OF THE SOUTH

rupt the royalist supply lines from Mexico City to Vera Cruz.²⁸ Guerrilla-type operations, involving destructive hit-and-run tactics and avoiding formal open military engagements, could have done irreparable damage to the viceregal government. Morelos, however, greatly desired a quick, decisive victory; and dubious about the possibilities of obtaining one in the Puebla-Vera Cruz theatre, he fixed his sights on the provincial capital city of Oaxaca.

Morelos remained in Tehuacán only seven days, making preparations for the expedition to Oaxaca in the greatest secrecy.²⁹ He called in the men under Victor Bravo in the Mixteca, and those serving in Izúcar under Matamoros, who was named second-in-command of Morelos' army. An insurgent force of some five thousand men, well-trained, adequately supplied, and ably led by such veterans as Galeana, the Bravos, and Matamoros, began the march toward Oaxaca on November 10. After two weeks Morelos' army was on the outskirts of Oaxaca demanding that the royalist garrison surrender. Meanwhile, the viceroy's forces had re-occupied Tehuacán and Orizaba soon after the insurgents left.

An implacable enemy of Morelos and one of the most outspoken foes of the revolution was Antonio Bergosa y Jordán, Bishop of Oaxaca, who was nominated Archbishop of Mexico by the Cádiz regency in 1811 to succeed Lizana y Beaumont. Because of unsettled conditions in Oaxaca at that time, however, several prominent citizens of that capital persuaded Bergosa to remain in his diocese and use his influence against the revolution until the situation became more stabilized there.³⁰ Not only did Bergosa begin to launch a deadly volley of bans, excommunications, censures, and fulminations against the rebel priests, but he also raised and equipped a body of ecclesiastics to resist any threat to the Oaxaca area by force. Morelos he described as a man with "horns and a tail."³¹ But like the other rebel priests, Morelos ignored the censures because he believed them to be invalid.

We have heard with sadness and regret the censures of the Oaxaca chapter [he said] but our consciences will remain clear and quiet so long as the defenders and adulators of Spain do not prove that the Mexican insurrection is unjust. Upon the truth or falsity of that proposition depends the validity or nullity of the censures imposed by our bishops. If the insurrection is just, we are not obligated to swear our fidelity to Spain, and when the law does not obligate us to do so, censure cannot be brought against the violators of that law. If the law is void, all the effect of the censure is removed, because there is no obligation, contumacy, nor disobedience; neither is there guilt in its transgression. . . . When an American goes over to the Spanish party, he is no longer a heretic; he can receive the sacraments, and the effects of the censure are thereby suspended.³²

As Morelos approached Oaxaca, he explained to Bishop Bergosa that he came with an "olive branch in one hand and a sword in the other," that the revolution was essentially an effort to break the chains of a slavery that had lasted for three centuries, and that should the demands of the insurgents be met, the bishop and all the clergy in the diocese would be preserved, together with their immunities and benefits.³³ But Bergosa rejected the offer. As the insurgents entered the city, he fled first to Vera Cruz and then to Mexico City in the following March to continue his relentless attacks on the rebel priests.³⁴

The insurgents swept into the city of Oaxaca on November 25.³⁵ So great was the temptation for loot, so starved were the insurgent forces for victory, and so intent on revenge were they as a result of the diatribes and insults heaped upon them by the Spanish civil and ecclesiastical leaders in Oaxaca, that Morelos was unable to restrain them, with the result that the city was completely sacked. Insurgent prisoners found by Morelos were freed, placed on horseback, and paraded around the square to impress the townspeople with the barbarity of which the royalists were capable. The royalist commanders were executed, but the ecclesiastics were spared. When Jacinto Moreno, Morelos' former instructor of Latin grammar, interceded in behalf of some two hundred prisoners, he was able to obtain the release of all but thirty whom Morelos especially distrusted.³⁶

THE CONQUEST OF THE SOUTH

Morelos' brilliant victory at Oaxaca greatly bolstered the fortune of the insurgents, enhanced his own personal prestige, and brought a vast amount of material benefits. "This beautiful province is worthy of your attention," wrote Morelos to Rayón, "for it will serve as a basis for the conquest of the whole kingdom; it is the first capital which we have taken which has a unity of its own; it can be defended with only a few men; and it has resources in men, mines, tobacco, ports, and cochineal, all of which can be used as effective weapons."³⁷ Moreover, the forces of Morelos confiscated a considerable quantity of jewels, silver, personal effects, and grain, as well as the sum of three million pesos, according to the estimate of one Oaxaca resident.³⁸ For the time being at least, much of the uncertainty which from the beginning had plagued the insurgents respecting their financial affairs in conducting the revolution was removed.

For almost two and a half months Oaxaca was Morelos' headquarters. During that time Morelos brought the surrounding countryside under effective control, organized and trained new divisions of militia, increased the pay of the soldiers, improved their equipment, and established an armory, which he placed under the direction of Manuel Mier y Terán, who had joined the insurgent forces preceding the attack on Oaxaca.³⁹ Administrative reforms included the appointment of José María Murguía as intendant of the province of Oaxaca, and the establishment of a *ayuntamiento* for the city under the leadership of the creoles. Morelos issued regulations regarding the hours to be maintained by business houses, the carrying of firearms, observance of the curfew, and the use of a badge for personal identification. Lastly, a Junta of Protection and Public Confidence was created to maintain public order and security. With the completion of the work of reform, a great ceremony was held, in which all took a solemn oath to the Supreme Junta. Morelos appeared in a splendid new uniform, a gift of Mariano Matamoros. Magnificently embroidered in gold, and carrying the insignia of the rank of captain-general, it symbolized Morelos at the peak of

his military career, acknowledged by friends and foes alike as the first chief of the revolution.⁴⁰

Early in 1813 Morelos began to make preparations for a campaign against the port of Acapulco. Not only did he desire to fulfill the commission of Hidalgo which he had failed to complete in 1810, but he also felt the need of a seaport that would improve commercial relations with foreign powers, and the possession of which at the same time would deprive the viceroy's government of vital imports. A number of authorities have severely criticized the decision of Morelos to take Acapulco. They have argued convincingly that its conquest was obviously time-consuming and expensive, but productive of only limited gains at best. Why waste time, money, and manpower on a fortress which was virtually impregnable, it has been asked, when the same results could have been achieved through a determined assault on the supply and communication lines of the royalists lying between the port and the capital? Aguirre Colorado, who has made the most thorough investigation of Morelos' Acapulco operations, puts it as follows:

Instead of attacking Puebla or surprising the weak garrisons of Córdoba and Orizaba, or of attempting a crushing moral and economic blow at the viceregal government; instead of devoting himself chiefly to crushing the disorganized royalist troops being used basically for protecting convoys . . . ; instead of adopting a plan along any of those lines, especially the last-mentioned one, which would have brought decisive results, he chose to drive on Acapulco.⁴¹

The Guadalupe society, secret partisans of independence in Mexico City, and the insurgents' chief source of information about viceregal affairs, insisted, rightly or wrongly, that the opportunity was ripe for Morelos to advance toward the capital — that the whole metropolitan population would rise up as a unit on hearing of the approach of his army. Morelos, however, chose to ignore their pleadings, and set out with an army of three thousand for Acapulco on February 9, 1813, leaving a garrison to defend Oaxaca. "Acapulco," wrote Morelos to one

THE CONQUEST OF THE SOUTH

of his lieutenants, "is a port which the insurgent cause should acquire and keep; Vera Cruz is next in importance, and although San Blas is third, it could be ignored if we could take the first two."⁴² The itinerary passed through San Pablo Huizo and Yanhuitlán to the northwest; it then swung abruptly to the southwest to Ometepepec, and from there it moved along the southern coast to Quetzala and Cruz Grande. The main body of the army arrived on the outskirts of Acapulco late in March. Matamoros, Galeana, the Bravos, and Guerrero were left at various points along the way to complete the subjugation of the southern coastal region.⁴³

It will be remembered that Acapulco was situated on the west side of the harbor, and that on the east side stood the castle fortress which served, together with two small forts, as the city's main defense. The port was ably commanded at that time by Pedro Antonio Vélez, a creole from Córdoba, who had a smaller force but heavier guns than the insurgents. Moreover, he had control of the sea and the use of two brigantines, *San Carlos* and *Guadalupita*.

The insurgents began their main attack on April 6, after their customary ultimatum to surrender had been rejected.⁴⁴ Within a week they had surrounded the city from the land side, and by the middle of the month it was in their hands. Morelos then directed his attention to the castle, the last remaining stronghold of royalist power in southern Mexico. A siege was laid, but progress was slow because of the lack of heavy artillery. Moreover, the insurgents were unable to check the flow of supplies to the fortress from Roqueta Island, situated near the mouth of the harbor. Accordingly, on the night of June 9, Pedro Galeana, nephew of the great insurgent commander, and Isidoro Montes de Oca, landed eighty men in a surprise move that not only captured the island but the *Guadalupita* as well. The insurgents were thus able to tighten the blockade considerably, even if they could not completely close it.⁴⁵

As the summer months of 1813 wore on, the siege of Acapulco

became increasingly a sordid story of heat and hardship, suffering and disease. Morelos in mid-August decided to strike. Discarding the suggestion to set fire to the fortress, for fear of taking the lives of the women, children, the aged, and the feeble, he ordered on the night of August 17 that the castle be surrounded and stormed. The insurgents kept up a heavy fire all night and by dawn were preparing to scale the walls. The attack made further resistance futile, and Vélez agreed to an armistice, which was drawn up and signed on August 19. Morelos' terms were lenient. Spaniards were given passports to any place they pleased, so long as they did not join the royalists, while the native-born men were mustered into Morelos' army. The next day an insurgent flag waved above the fortress castle of San Diego de Acapulco, and the commission which Morelos had received from Hidalgo had at last been fulfilled.⁴⁶

The conquest of Acapulco meant that Morelos was master of an expanse of territory stretching from Guatemala on the east to Colima on the west, and from the Pacific Ocean on the south to a line roughly approximating the nineteenth parallel of latitude. The area included the greater portion of the modern states of Oaxaca and Guerrero, and the southern part of the states of Vera Cruz, Puebla, Mexico, and Michoacán.

Morelos' success as a military commander, in spite of his complete lack of formal military training, was achieved largely because of his superb knowledge of terrain and topography, his inherent administrative and organizational ability, judgment of men and choice of officer material, close attention to the minutest detail, strict training and disciplinary requirements, and his strong emphasis on surprise, deception, and mobility. Mexican historians have gone overboard in singing their praises of Morelos as a military genius. He would probably be the first to deny this claim. Although it has been said that he won twenty-five out of thirty-six engagements, it should be pointed out that he lost many important ones, that his strategy was often defective and short-sighted, and that he committed a number of costly

THE CONQUEST OF THE SOUTH

blunders, as practically every Mexican historian will admit.

Time was to reveal that Acapulco was one of those blunders. Strategically, the circumventing of the port would have accomplished as much as its capture. The seven months that Morelos spent in such useless and wasteful military operations gave Calleja the best part of the year to carry out his plans to destroy the revolutionary chiefs in the north, and then to turn his united strength upon those in the south. The conquest of Acapulco, while seemingly representing Morelos' military fortunes at their height, in actuality marked the beginning of their decline.

From Acapulco, Morelos left in haste for Chilpancingo to formulate plans for the new insurgent government. Before that move may be discussed, however, it is necessary to turn to the important developments which had been taking place in the capital while Morelos was conquering the south.

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MORELOS OF MEXICO

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EVENTS IN MEXICO CITY

AN important and dramatic, yet largely unfamiliar aspect of the movement for Mexican independence was the part played by a secret organization of insurgent patriots of Mexico City who called themselves the *Guadalupes*.¹ Although this group contributed to the cause of independence in a variety of ways, their chief service was espionage and the transmission of vital information to the insurgent commanders in the field. Taking copies of the viceroy's correspondence from his secretary's office,² they drafted comprehensive reports for their insurgent colleagues covering a multitude of topics: royalist military information and plans, troop and convoy movements, size and location of the viceroy's forces, and recruiting activities; political events in Spain and in Mexico City; governmental finances; status of the revolutionary party in the capital; and developments in connection with the search for foreign assistance. The *Guadalupes* also helped in the establishment of an insurgent press; smuggled arms, munitions, and supplies; sheltered royalist deserters and fugitive insurgents; and exerted considerable influence in obtaining the election of delegates to the Spanish Cortes in 1812 and 1813 who were sympathetic to Mexican independence.³

Although there is some disagreement among authorities as to the time the society originated, probably it came into being soon after the *Grito de Dolores*. It then took the name "*Los Guadalupes*" and began to function as a secret organization to assist the independence movement in any way it could. Its membership was drawn largely from the creoles of the professional class in Mexico City and included lawyers, journalists, literary figures, the wives of several of the group, and even some who held responsible positions in the viceroy's government.

There were more than twenty members, of whom Juan Bautista Raz y Guzmán, a lawyer, apparently was the central figure. Many whose names in Mexican history are well known had a connection with the organization, but perhaps were not members: Carlos María Bustamante, Guadalupe Victoria, José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, Andrés Quintana Roo, and Leona Vicario, the niece of Raz y Guzmán and, sometime later, the wife of Quintana Roo.⁴ Meetings ordinarily were held in the homes of the members, but on occasion they gathered in what appeared to be a week-end social function at the hacienda of León near Mexico City, property of one of the members named Manuel Díaz.⁵ The viceregal authorities were extremely concerned about the Guadalupe society and its activities, but until 1814 were unable to compromise its secrecy or reduce its influence in any appreciable way. "A league of rebels, under the name of the Guadalupes, has been growing for more than three years in the heart of this capital," wrote Félix María Calleja after he had become Viceroy of New Spain, and he continued: it maintains contacts throughout the entire kingdom; it includes within its ranks a great number of well-known people in the government itself; and it directs and encourages the rebel groups in their defeats. From this club the rebels receive as much information as can be conveyed with safety, and accurate accounts of the developments in the capital are forwarded: the status of the forces, munitions, and supplies, all of which is taken from the offices of the government; accounts of the resources of the government, its scarcities and its difficulties; and explanations for the decisions of the viceroy regarding various problems which arise.⁶

Not long after the Guadalupes first established contact with Morelos in September, 1812, political developments in Spain and Mexico City opened new opportunities for them to do effective work for the insurgent cause. It will be remembered that the Junta of Seville had retired to the Isle of León in 1809, where it had turned the government over to a regency of five members. That group, in turn, convoked a national Cortes in September, 1810, which produced, some eighteen months later,

the Spanish Constitution of 1812. A typical product of the political liberalism prevailing in the era of the French Revolution, the chief features of the constitution included: popular sovereignty, Catholicism as the established religion, hereditary monarchy, separation of powers, a national legislature based on population, elective municipal offices, freedom of the press, and an administrative chief assisted by an advisory council to govern the provinces.⁷ After much hesitation Viceroy Venegas published the constitution on September 28, and a week later, on October 5, proclaimed freedom of the press to be in effect, subject only to a supervisory board of five members, or *junta de censura*, to guard against seditious writings.⁸

Even before the viceroy's proclamation of freedom of the press, however, the Guadalupes had assisted Ignacio Rayón and Morelos in establishing several insurgent publications. From a printer in Mexico City named José Rebelo, the Guadalupes purchased a press for eight hundred pesos and persuaded the printer to work for them in behalf of the insurgent cause. The story is told that the wives of three of the members, escorted by Raz y Guzmán on horseback, smuggled the printing press out of Mexico City. The party arrived at Atizapán, where the press was packed in fruit crates and taken on muleback to Tenango. There it was received by Ignacio Rayón, who immediately sent it to Sultepec, where Rebelo, the printer, and José María Cos, the insurgent editor, established *Ilustrador Americano* in May, 1812.⁹ About that time the distinguished writer Andrés Quintana Roo left Mexico City for Sultepec, where he founded *Semanario Patriótico Americano*, printed by the Imprenta de la Nación on the same press that José María Cos received from the Guadalupes. Both papers were published in Sultepec until October, 1812, when they were moved to Tlalpujahua.¹⁰ While this move was under way, the Guadalupes notified Morelos that they had contracted with a printer to help him establish an insurgent publication. Presumably, Morelos used him after the capture of Oaxaca to found *Correo Americano*

del Sur, edited at first by José Manuel de Herrera, and later by Carlos María Bustamante.¹¹

The new concessions on printing that Viceroy Venegas granted seemed so strange at first that writers scarcely knew what to say. Carlos María Bustamante, in Mexico City at that time, began the first number of his periodical *Juguettillo* with the query: "What can we talk about now?"¹² Soon, however, the capital was flooded with pamphlets highly partisan in tone, produced by writers like Bustamante and José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, who did not always bother about having their publications examined by the *junta de censura* before they circulated them. For this reason, the new freedom became such an effective device for propagating revolutionary ideas and undermining the government that Venegas on December 5 suspended the right he had granted only two months before. Some pamphleteers like Lizardi were caught and jailed; others like Bustamante, aided by the Guadalupe, were able to escape. Obviously, the insurgent party denounced the viceroy's action everywhere as "despotism and tyranny at its worst"; and Morelos commented that the granting of the license to print was an example of Spanish duplicity – a deliberate attempt to trap the writers so they could be jailed.¹³ The only hope remaining for the insurgent party of Mexico City, wrote the Guadalupe, was to secure the election of members of the *cabildo* who would be sympathetic to the cause and who would therefore demand the complete implementation of the constitution, including freedom of the press.¹⁴

Another innovation in the Constitution of 1812 was the provision establishing a representative system of government for Spain and the overseas possessions whereby parish electors were to choose *cabildo* members and provincial electors. These in turn were to name the deputies to the Cortes and the provincial deputation. Accordingly, in October, Viceroy Venegas decreed that the choosing of the twenty-five electors to which Mexico City was entitled would take place on November 29, 1812. As

EVENTS IN MEXICO CITY

a result of the voting held on that day as scheduled, all candidates selected were creoles, not a single European being chosen, nor even anyone favorable to the European party. Overcome with joy, the Guadalupe described the results of the elections as "the first step toward the establishment of Mexican liberty."¹⁵ The viceroy, understandably concerned about the outcome, remained completely silent about holding the other elections. Near the end of December, he finally declared that he had decided to suspend the newly chosen electors, and that he was keeping the old *cabildo* in power until further notice.¹⁶ Thus, as with freedom of the press, the viceroy suspended the second liberal feature of the Constitution of 1812 after it had been in effect for about two months. This setback was no great loss from Morelos' point of view, for nothing less than the complete independence of Mexico would satisfy him from this time on. He no longer had any faith, he said, in the declaration of the Spanish Cortes that Americans were equal to Europeans, for it was lacking in sincerity and had been issued only to betray the native peoples of New Spain.

Only for purposes of deception and flattery [he told the people of Oaxaca in 1812] do the Europeans address us as brothers. If they had proceeded with sincerity and in good faith, they would have declared our independence at the same time that they declared theirs, and they would have given us the liberty of establishing our government, as they have established theirs.¹⁷

During the latter months of 1812 the Guadalupe were involved in a rather curious episode which began as a plan involving some merchants of Mexico City and then suddenly developed, through the intervention of Viceroy Venegas, as a proposal for a cessation of hostilities. A group of wealthy merchants, owners of a rich cargo which had just been landed at Acapulco, appealed to the Guadalupe in October, 1812, to use their influence to secure from the insurgents permission for the safe passage of the goods to Cuernavaca, where the cargo would be received by government forces and escorted to the capital.

In return for the safe delivery of the cargo the merchants agreed to pay 45,000 pesos, a sum indicative of the advantage the insurgents enjoyed in controlling the territory between Acapulco and the capital. The Guadalupe approved the plan and submitted it to Rayón. Juan Raz y Guzmán was selected to conduct negotiations and work out the details.¹⁸

Ignacio Rayón viewed the plan with suspicion, but replied that he was making no commitment until he had consulted with Liceaga and Verduzco, his colleagues on the Supreme Junta, and with Morelos. Meanwhile, Rayón learned that the plan involved considerably more than was originally proposed: that the viceroy was desirous of negotiating a cessation of hostilities with the insurgents, details of which were to be arranged in a conference at the hacienda of Tepetongo. There, Juan Bautista Lobo, representing the viceroy, and Tomás Murphi, agent for the merchants, planned to meet Rayón and his associates.¹⁹

The viceroy's motives respecting the suspension of hostilities are not clear, but probably he was seeking an arrangement in the nature of a truce which would allow him to gain time until the political, financial, and military situation in Mexico City had improved. Rayón wrote Morelos a second time, indicating he would suspend all proceedings if he detected duplicity.²⁰ On the day agreed upon for the negotiations, however, the viceroy's representative failed to appear, and the whole plan collapsed. The viceroy's motives for suspending negotiations are as difficult to determine as his motives for beginning them in the first place. Negotiations might well have collapsed anyway, since Liceaga and Verduzco had voiced strong objections; and Morelos, who controlled the territory through which the cargo would pass, made his opinion clear that the Spaniards could not be trusted to live up to any agreement, and that the entire matter was an enemy plot to deceive the insurgents.²¹

Particularly alarming to the Guadalupe late in 1812 was the return to a position of authority and influence in viceregal circles of Félix María Calleja. Following his failure to capture

EVENTS IN MEXICO CITY

Morelos at Cuautla, Calleja's relations with the viceroy had become so strained that he had surrendered his command of the Army of the Center and had lived in retirement in Mexico City for the remainder of the year. But on December 29, 1812, Viceroy Venegas appointed Calleja military governor of Mexico City, a development the Guadalupe interpreted as a move on the part of the Europeans in Mexico City, who had lost confidence in Venegas, to prepare the way for having Calleja named viceroy. "Should that come about," they wrote, "despotism and tyranny will ascend to the greatest height, for in cruelty, ability, skill, and influence, Calleja surpasses Venegas." Within two months the fears of the Guadalupe were confirmed, for on February 28, 1813, Calleja received orders naming him Viceroy of New Spain.²²

Félix María Calleja, "the new Tamerlane," as Carlos Bustamante called him,²³ was cold, calculating, efficient, egotistical, and opportunistic. At one time late in 1812 when his relations with Venegas were so strained, Calleja had shown interest in a proposal of the Guadalupe that painted in the most glowing terms the rewards that would be his should he care to join the party of independence. The Guadalupe named two envoys to negotiate with Calleja, and the three fixed a day when he was to join the revolution. But later in a conference which took place the day after Calleja had been named viceroy, the two envoys, not having heard of the appointment, received the shock of their lives as Calleja greeted them: "If you were not my friends, I would have you shot. You are speaking to the Viceroy of New Spain!"²⁴

At the time Calleja took office on March 4, 1813, Mexico City was divided into three factions — the *gachupines*, the insurgents, and the *callejistas*. Many Europeans regarded Calleja's wavering and uncertainty with suspicion, while the insurgents on the other hand viewed them only as evidence of his opportunism and concluded that his brutality would be no less severe than that of Venegas.²⁵ Calleja's conciliatory policy upon taking

office was offered as proof of the arguments of *gachupines* and insurgents alike, for though the viceroy outlined an energetic program for crushing the rebellion and refused to restore freedom to the press, he nevertheless attempted to appease dissident groups by re-establishing the remaining portions of the suspended constitution and providing for the election of the *cabildo* of Mexico City.²⁶

The election was held on April 4. Not a single European was chosen, although the Guadalupes reported that the viceroy and the archbishop exerted the greatest pressure to secure victories for their candidates.²⁷ Despite the defeat for the European party, Calleja announced that the elections for naming the individuals to compose the provincial deputation, together with those to represent Mexico in the Spanish Cortes would be held in July. "The election of the provincial deputation," wrote the Guadalupes, "is of the greatest importance, and we are working with every effort to insure that it will be composed of persons of our confidence."²⁸ Their labors were not in vain, for the outcome was another decisive victory for the Americans.

We took a great deal of interest in seeing that the election would bring victory to Americans of liberal ideas, sound qualities, and patriotic devotion [they reported to Morelos] and we have achieved that to our satisfaction in spite of our opponents, who made the greatest effort to influence the voting. Archbishop [Antonio] Bergosa [y Jordán] organized a large party, which worked with every means to influence the parish priests and ecclesiastics who served as electors for the provinces. Nevertheless, they conducted themselves with a heroism which we never expected. The viceroy worked no less energetically to achieve the success of his plans. . . .

On the next day, the election of the *vocales* to the provincial deputation was held. Mexico City was to elect two delegates and one *suplente* because Oaxaca is occupied by you. The most damaging blow was inflicted on our enemies, for [Miguel Gurudi y] Alcocer, ex-deputy to the Cortes, and José María Fagoaga, European by birth, but American by education and training, were elected. Chosen as the *suplente* was Licenciado Cristo [y Conde], who was born in Havana, and will perform his duties very well for us.²⁹

The election of the deputies from Mexico to the Cortes held during that same month resulted in still another triumph for the insurgent party. Fourteen deputies and four *suplentes*, all of them American by birth, were chosen; but when Calleja declared that the government was unable to provide funds for their transportation to Spain, the representation from Mexico was reduced to two persons — José María Alcalá, canon of the metropolitan church, and Manuel Cortázar, a lawyer.³⁰

Viceroy Calleja, in an *informe* to the Spanish government, made no attempt to minimize the importance of the victories of the revolutionary party during the first months of his administration.

At the present time [he began] two rebels who are acting in the capacity of deputies are en route to the Cortes; they are the *magistral* José de Alcalá and the lawyer Manuel Cortázar. Nowhere can there be such bitterness as my own in seeing two such pernicious subjects proceed to their destination without any obstacle so that they can dictate laws to the noble Spaniards and use the sovereignty of the metropolis to prepare and hasten the ruin of the Americas. . . . Since the rebels here are in continuous relation and agreement with their deputies in the peninsula, they understand what steps should be taken for America, and they demand compliance with their characteristic arrogance. . . .

The first popular election for the *cabildo* was the first triumph of the rebels . . . ; the city was flooded with crowds of people, who carried torches all during the night; they shouted vivas to Morelos, to independence, and to the electors, all of whom were unreliable Americans, and most of them disloyal; they shouted death to the Europeans and to their government; they tried to break into the cathedral tower to ring the bells; and they had the audacity to appear before the palace and demand artillery. . . . Anyone can see the outlook with regard to the insurrection; but New Spain will not hang itself, nor refuse to obey its legitimate sovereign while I am alive and am responsible for its preservation, even though it should be necessary for the country to suffer blood and fire until the infamous are annihilated and the flag of the monarchy of Spain is planted everywhere. . . .³¹

One of the dominant themes in the correspondence of the Guadalupe with Morelos during 1813 was their insistence that the situation in Mexico City was ripe for his advance and that the strength of the revolutionary party within the capital was so great that only the news of the approach of the insurgent army was necessary to provoke a massive uprising which would overthrow Calleja's tyranny and deliver the capital to the invading revolutionary forces. One of their most interesting letters describes, and perhaps exaggerates, the status of revolutionary opinion and organization in the metropolis:

The party of true Americans inside Mexico City is very great, though its exact size cannot be estimated accurately. We cannot determine the allegiance of everyone in the capital, but we know that almost all the people aspiring to the aristocracy are so unprincipled by nature that there are only a few of them who could be called insurgents and who desire the liberty of their country. Most of them do not want to expose themselves to danger to contribute to the cause. . . . They often accept the tyranny which prevails, . . . and therefore this group cannot be of much use to us.

The common people automatically follow the first cry they hear. They do not look ahead; they never think of the future; they are content to live as dejected spirits as long as they are allowed to engage in vice. . . . Yet this class of people can be led easily, and some kind of party may be formed of them. The whole area of Mexico City is made up of this type, but their numbers lately have decreased greatly because of royalist recruiting parties, who want them for their regiments and because of the present epidemic which afflicts us.

The third class, or middle class, is not of the aristocracy nor of the common people. It is on the members of this class that we must depend largely for our support, for they are the ones who are most eager to sacrifice their lives for the cause. Their fear of the government's prisons and persecutions, and their dread of expressing their thoughts openly, have caused division among us, but that will not be the case when they hear you are approaching Mexico City, because all who have not declared themselves openly will join hands with our just cause.

We cannot say with certainty where the greatest number of true Americans are to be found within the city, but this will inform you that the whole area of the metropolis is filled with good Americans,

EVENTS IN MEXICO CITY

and that your name is heard everywhere with the greatest rejoicing and enthusiasm. Only the center of the city is inhabited by *gachupines* and *chaqueta* creoles.³²

But the plea of the Guadalupe, even if their information and judgment were reliable, went ignored and unheeded. Morelos was too busy during the first part of 1813 with the conquest of Acapulco, and too occupied the second half of the year with the organization of the revolutionary government to move as the Guadalupe desired. When he took the field again late in 1813 he suffered such disastrous reverses that the idea of attacking the capital ceased to be even a remote possibility.

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MORELOS OF MEXICO

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MORELOS' REFORM PROGRAM

IT will be remembered that Ignacio Rayón and the other members of the Supreme Junta, José Sixto Verduzco and José María Liceaga, had barely escaped to Sultepec after Calleja had defeated them at Zitácuaro in the early days of January, 1812. To regain lost prestige and, according to Alamán, "to consolidate and perpetuate the authority of the junta,"¹ Rayón drafted a constitution early in 1812, the first in the history of Mexico, inasmuch as the Spanish Constitution of 1812 did not go into effect until October of that year. Reflecting in some measure the ideas of Hidalgo, it declared that the Roman Catholic religion was to be the established faith of the state and that sovereignty, which emanated from the people, was to be vested in the person of Ferdinand VII but exercised by a supreme American national junta of five members elected by the provinces. A congress of representatives named for a three-year term by the property owners was to exercise the legislative power, but it was to be guided in its decisions by a council of state composed of all officers of the rank of brigadier and above. The constitution called for the establishment of four captains-general, including the three members of the junta, one of whom in time of war was to be chosen as temporary generalissimo with dictatorial powers. Moreover, the constitution contained numerous liberal features, such as freedom of the press, the right of habeas corpus, and the abolition of caste distinctions, slavery, and torture.²

On April 30, 1812, Rayón forwarded a copy of the constitution to Morelos for his comment and suggestions. Rayón received no reply, however, until early November. Although Morelos gave all sorts of excuses for his failure to answer, his delay was undoubtedly deliberate. By delaying he believed he could strengthen

his own position: he was confident that his military fortunes would improve throughout the year, while those of the junta members would decline. That is precisely what happened. While Morelos was winning at Tehuacán and Orizaba, the operations of Rayón around Toluca and in the Tenango-Tenancingo area, and those of Liceaga in Guanajuato and Verduzco in Michoacán, resulted only in defeat and failure. By November, when Morelos finally framed his reply, he was in a far better position than any of the junta members to gain the post of generalissimo, should Rayón's document go into effect.

After indicating on November 2, 1812, that "the mask of independence must be removed inasmuch as the fate of our Ferdinand VII is now common knowledge,"³ Morelos on November 7 forwarded a list of his objections to Rayón's constitution. First of all, the name of Ferdinand must be excluded, he said; any reference to his name was at that time "hypothetical." The council of state should be limited to a fixed number of officers because it would be very difficult to assemble all of those of the rank of brigadier and above should they be needed for consultation. Lastly, Morelos argued that the generalissimo should be elected for life and should hold office until incapacity, illness, or the age of sixty made further service impracticable.⁴

Whether Morelos' objections discouraged Rayón or whether he felt that the Spanish Constitution of 1812, which had been proclaimed in Mexico City in the meantime, eclipsed his own plan of government, is not clear, but his disgust with the whole project was fully apparent. He authorized Morelos to publish the constitution if he so desired, but concluded by saying that "we have done nothing except things to make us look ridiculous as if we were mere automatons."⁵ Rayón's project never became law, though Morelos later made use of some of its provisions.

The great victory of Morelos at Oaxaca firmly established his reputation as foremost among the insurgent military commanders. As a result, though with some reluctance, Rayón's junta confirmed the appointment of Morelos as a fourth member of

that body. The situation had changed since 1811, when he rejected the offer to serve on the junta and designated Verduzco to exercise the functions of membership for him. Now triumphant in 1812, Morelos decided that membership in Rayón's junta might be the most effective way to secure the adoption of his own political views and principles. As a matter of fact Morelos had already begun to press for the addition of a fifth member to the junta, even before his appointment as the fourth member had been confirmed.⁶ It is interesting to note that Morelos' ideas respecting the method to be used in appointing the fifth member varied with circumstances — before the conquest of Oaxaca, Morelos was willing for the junta to make the choice, but after that victory he insisted that a citizen of the province of Oaxaca should be given the honor of membership and accordingly submitted a list of ecclesiastics with instructions for Rayón to choose one.⁷ Quite naturally Rayón refused to bestow the office upon a person whom Morelos would completely dominate, and therefore countered by suggesting a candidate of his own. This move produced a stalemate between the two leaders, intensified their distrust of each other, and brought forth the charge from Verduzco and Liceaga that Morelos was a despot.⁸ To make matters worse, Rayón's colleagues began to quarrel with one another, and the resulting charges and counter-charges produced what Castillo Negrete called "an unprecedented scandal" that did serious damage to the insurgent cause.⁹ Each of the junta members appealed to Morelos for support, but received from him a reprimand instead. Maintaining a scrupulous neutrality, Morelos forwarded copies to Verduzco and Liceaga of the following note he addressed to Rayón:

Although you did not tell me in your last letter of the violent discord between you and the two other members, rumors about it have spread to the provinces, and it has been confirmed by the three couriers who arrived here today. Even though I read the letters of each one of you in the greatest secrecy, it has been impossible to conceal information concerning this catastrophe. I am thoroughly disgusted with everything. God grant that this cancer, which the

enemy hopes for so much, shall not continue. Should all of us become involved in it, our perdition will be assured. I will sacrifice myself to obey the Supreme Junta, but I cannot give my support to any one individual for the purpose of destroying the others. . . . Furthermore, I will never accept a tyrannical government — that is, a monarchy, even though I should be elected sovereign. It is essential that we rule ourselves by a published constitution, so that the provinces will understand what a blunder all this dissension has been.¹⁰

On April 30, 1813, Morelos issued instructions for the formation of an elective assembly in Oaxaca to choose the fifth member of the junta, expressing at the same time the opinion that the total membership of the body should be increased to seven or nine.¹¹ Thus, the stronger Morelos' position became, the larger the number he recommended for junta membership. At length, an election held in Oaxaca in August named José María Murguía y Galardi as the fifth member, with Carlos María Bustamante receiving the second highest number of votes.¹² By now, however, Morelos had decided on an entirely new approach. So intense was his disgust with the junta, and so great was his desire for political stability, that he had already determined to convoke a national congress composed of representatives from the provinces for the purpose of completely reconstructing the insurgent government under his direction. Rayón might protest that such a body would be "lacking in authorization, prudence, and legality," and that Morelos' action was dictated by "vanity, adulation, and pride,"¹³ but the complaints were meaningless, as Rayón himself knew, for his power was broken, and Morelos was master of the revolutionary movement.

In addition to his demand for the independence of Mexico, Morelos, while engaged in the conquest of the south, also proclaimed far-reaching social and economic reforms, which he hoped in time might be accepted as the program of the revolution and enacted into law by a stable insurgent government. Echoing some of the principles he had set forth earlier, Morelos demanded that the "very lovely conglomeration of social gradations" — Indian, mulatto, and mestizo — be abolished and all

MORELOS' REFORM PROGRAM

native-born persons be designated as "Americans." He insisted that sovereignty should reside in the people, but it should be exercised by a congress of Americans from which Europeans should be excluded. Since he believed that virtue was the only quality distinguishing men and their usefulness to state and church, Morelos called for the abolition of slavery, the tribute, and debts owed by Americans to Europeans. The lands should be owned by those who worked them, and the workers should receive the income from those lands.

All should work [he said] in that occupation which will render a person most useful to the nation. By the sweat of our brows we must work so that all of us will have bread to eat. The women should busy themselves in their own honest household labors; the priests must take care of souls; the laborers must be employed in agriculture, and the artisans in industry; the remaining men should devote themselves to the army or the government.¹⁴

The pro-Spanish historian Lucas Alamán, who rarely let an opportunity pass to discredit Morelos when he could, wrote in 1850: "The communists and socialists of our day, to whose systems Morelos leaned in a considerable degree, will recognize completely their principles in some of the points which he recommended to the Congress [of Chilpancingo]." "Since Morelos had come to regard the war as a struggle between proprietors and proletariat," continued Alamán, "there was attempted nothing less than the complete destruction of all property and the distribution of it among those who had nothing."¹⁵

The source for Alamán's charges is a celebrated document, which was undated and unsigned, though in all probability written by Morelos, entitled *Medidas políticas que deben tomar los jefes de los ejércitos Americanos para lograr sus fines por medios llanos y seguros, evitando la efusión de sangre de una y otra parte*. The subject of considerable controversy, it contains the following basic features:

1. All rich persons, nobles, and officials of the highest ranks, whether creoles or *gachupines*, will be considered enemies of the nation.

All their properties will be subject to confiscation, half going to the poor, and half to the army.

2. All properties will be taken as reimbursement.
3. The redistribution which will affect the people of the towns must be made with the greatest care, so that no one individual becomes enriched, and so that everyone in general is given assistance.
4. The same policy will apply to the properties of the churches, with the exception of parochial books.
5. Royalist buildings and archives will be burned.
6. Overseas products will be destroyed.
7. All haciendas greater than two leagues in size will be broken up into smaller plots.
8. Tobacco crops, mines, and sugar plantations will be destroyed.¹⁶

Much confusion has resulted because of the existence of two different texts of *Medidas políticas* — an abbreviated, incomplete copy drafted by a certain Juan Martiñena, and the complete text, copied by the royalist secretary Patricio Humana in October, 1814. Alamán admitted that he used only the Martiñena text with its numerous deletions and omissions; but an examination of the Humana text reveals without question that Morelos wrote the document when he was in the Tehuacán-Orizaba area in the fall of 1812, rather than in late 1813 in conjunction with the Congress of Chilpancingo, as Alamán states. Moreover, Morelos intended to set forth a military plan rather than a radical socio-economic program. The document was drafted at a time when Morelos was in desperate need of a military victory to strengthen his political position, and *Medidas políticas* should therefore be regarded as an aspect of his military preparations for the attack on Oaxaca. His immediate objective, he said, was "to destroy the tyrannical government and its satellites, check its greed with the destruction of the means by which it wages war, and strip the rich of the funds with which the government is supported."¹⁷

The points of *Medidas políticas* involving confiscation of properties, their redistribution, and the division of the large haciendas have caused many Mexican historians, especially in

MORELOS' REFORM PROGRAM

the present century, to hail Morelos as a pioneer agrarian reformer. To be sure, he did from time to time refer to the land problem, and on several occasions he recommended that those who worked the lands should be the owners and should receive the income from what they produced. He also suggested in the full Humana text that "there should be no one individual who should have a great expanse of unproductive land while thousands of people remain in a slave status. Instead, they should become free proprietors of a limited amount of land for the public welfare, as well as their own."¹⁸ But these recommendations should be regarded as only means to an end rather than the end itself. His main purpose, from which he never deviated, was to annihilate the Spanish government and destroy its ability to make war. At no time did Morelos seriously consider a comprehensive agrarian program or submit one to the Congress of Chilpancingo.

The officials whom Morelos appointed to administer the finances of the insurgents were José María Murguía y Galardi, the intendant of the province of Oaxaca and subsequently the fifth member of Rayón's junta; Francisco de Pimentel, minister of the treasury; and José de Micheltorena, paymaster of the army. Morelos gave detailed instructions to these officials to be followed in their handling of insurgent funds. The instructions included the preparation of complete and accurate monthly reports of all receipts and expenditures.¹⁹ Booty and the spoils of war provided much of the revenue. Oaxaca, for example, yielded three million pesos' worth of jewelry, cotton, and clothing, and proved to be Morelos' richest prize. Other revenues came from properties confiscated from Europeans. The insurgents swept aside the greater part of the taxes and duties of Spain's colonial administration, although they retained the *alcabala* (reduced from eight to four percent), the *diezmos*, and certain other parochial duties for the support of the clergy. Priests were to be exempt from payment of the tax on goods brought for their own personal use. The government monopolies

on gunpowder and dyes were abolished, but all nitrates, sulphur, and gunpowder mined or manufactured had to be sold to the insurgent government.²⁰ Import duties constituted another source of revenue: Morelos declared that all goods entering ports under insurgent control were to be subject to a minimum ad valorem duty of twelve percent, which would never exceed one hundred percent. In administering finances Morelos was forced from time to time to resort to a *donativo*, or forced contribution on a product such as corn meal, to meet increasing governmental expenses, which in late 1812 were running to more than 1,500 pesos a day. When Morelos learned that certain merchants were fleecing insurgent officials and private citizens by charging exorbitant prices for food and other necessities, he promptly issued a decree placing price ceilings on seven basic food commodities, as well as on soap, cigarettes, and candles.²¹

The financial difficulties of the insurgents were intensified by an annoying currency problem. Morelos had begun the issuance of a copper currency in 1811, and it was the only medium of exchange in use until after the capture of Oaxaca, when the coining of silver was begun. Although the insurgent mint at Oaxaca cast a large amount of silver, the supply of silver was far more limited than that of copper, with the result that there was considerable hoarding of silver coins by merchants, who refused to accept any other currency for their merchandise. Merchants carried off much silver currency to territories under royalist control. Counterfeiters made matters worse by adding spurious silver coins to the money supply.

There should be an increase in the coinage of silver and copper [suggested Francisco de Pimentel, the insurgent treasurer] and the hammer-struck coins should have a milled edge so that counterfeiting can be checked. . . . The silver supply which remains for coinage is very limited, and the hoarding of silver has forced people to pay a considerable price in copper to obtain it. Without silver one cannot find any grain or blankets to buy because the Indians refuse to carry the goods because of transportation difficulties and because they are not obligated to accept copper money. . . . The treasury should issue

MORELOS' REFORM PROGRAM

paper money in denominations of from five to a thousand pesos, leaving enough copper coins to facilitate small business transactions. Paper money would be easier to handle and more difficult to counterfeit. . . . We should also coin gold with the prescribed milled edges, because a considerable amount may be taken from the mines of Teoxomulco, Río de San Antonio, Texas, and Ixtexpi.²²

No doubt Morelos made a strong effort to correct abuses and improve the financial situation of the insurgents, yet in the following statement to Carlos María Bustamante, he recognized that the problems were so great as to make a solution almost impossible.

At first I prohibited absolutely all trade [he declared] but later I issued an order that merchants from enemy territory could buy goods with silver only; then I ordered that conquered towns should pay for their wares with copper. Yet there are many transactions which are characterized by wickedness and the desire for personal gain.²³

In the realm of ecclesiastical affairs Morelos found the Dean of the Oaxaca chapter, Antonio Ibáñez de Corvera, much more cooperative with the insurgent cause than Bishop Antonio Bergosa y Jordán had been. In the main, Ibáñez gave tacit consent at least to Morelos' use of the *vicario castrense*, or army chaplain, for the exercise of priestly functions and ecclesiastical duties for the insurgent army while it was on the march. In defining the ecclesiastical powers of the *vicario castrense*, Morelos and the insurgents made use of the privileges Clement X extended to chaplains in the bull of 1736, *Quoniam in Exercitibus*, which granted them the authority to assist in marriages, administer all the sacraments with the exception of confirmation and ordination, and to exercise all parochial functions.²⁴ The most active of the insurgent chaplains were José de San Martín, who had formerly served Bishop Bergosa, and José Manuel de Herrera, former *cura* of Huamuxtitlán, who joined Morelos at Chautla late in 1811.²⁵

The personal correspondence between Morelos and Ibáñez de Corvera covered many topics both of an ecclesiastical and a political nature. There was much discussion of such religious

matters as insurgent marriages, the nomination of ecclesiastics to parishes in need of spiritual guidance, the supplying of isolated parishes with sacramental necessities, burial rites and ceremonies for insurgents killed in battle, maintenance of discipline among the Oaxaca clergy, and the silencing of those European ecclesiastics who opposed the insurgent movement. Sometimes political and military affairs were discussed, such as the latest battlefield reports, insurgent military plans, the selection of the fifth member of Ignacio Rayón's junta, and the representatives of Oaxaca for Morelos' proposed insurgent congress.²⁶

Like his predecessor Miguel Hidalgo, Morelos made extensive use of the name of the patron saint of the Indians, the Virgin of Guadalupe, to gain the support of the Indians for the revolution. Morelos, however, was far more aware than Hidalgo and others of the nationalistic influence which strong support of the Indian patron saint might lend to the revolution, and for that reason has been called the most outstanding of the insurgent leaders for his *guadalupanismo*.²⁷ There are a number of examples to support this conclusion. Early in 1811 after the occupation of the southern territory, Morelos established the province of Tecpán and named its capital Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. On various occasions he preached sermons in honor of the Virgin. At Oaxaca, Morelos ordered a huge demonstration for the patron saint, and, according to an observer, as the church bells rang Morelos appeared in the window of the palace that overlooked the plaza, threw silver coins to the people, and ordered a procession of the groups from all the neighboring districts, each of which carried a standard bearing a most striking image of the Virgin of Guadalupe.²⁸ His decree of March 11, 1813, declared that

on the twelfth day of each month a special mass would be celebrated in all towns; on all balconies and in all doors there was to be placed an altar with an image of the Virgin, together with the necessary lights. All men ten years of age and over were to carry on their hats a badge with the national colors of white and blue, and a hat band on which they were to indicate their allegiance and devotion to the Virgin.²⁹

MORELOS' REFORM PROGRAM

The principal leaders of Mexican independence generally recognized the immense importance of the press as an instrument to disseminate information and propagandize the cause. Miguel Hidalgo established *El Despertador Americano* in Guadalajara; it published seven numbers during December, 1810, and January, 1811. José María Cos, an associate of Ignacio Rayón, founded *Ilustrador Nacional* in Sultepec in 1812, and made paper, ink, and all necessary equipment and tools with his own hands. After six issues had appeared, Cos suspended production, and started *Ilustrador Americano*, using a printer and a press that the Guadalupes of Mexico City had sent him. That same press also printed *Semanario Patriótico Americano*, edited by the distinguished Andrés Quintana Roo. Both papers were published in Sultepec until October, 1812, when they were moved to Tlalpujahua. Quintana Roo's paper lasted until January, 1813, while Cos' *Ilustrador Americano* appeared until April, 1813.³⁰

Morelos may have started a press even before the conquest of Oaxaca and the subsequent founding of *Sud* and *Correo Americano del Sur* in that city early in 1813; the Guadalupe correspondence of October, 1812, refers to Morelos' "little press" and a printer they had hired for him.³¹ But Morelos' printing operations did not begin on a large scale until after the conquest of Oaxaca, when he employed a printer named José María Idiáquez, and started work on a periodical called *Sud*. It is probable that only two issues of *Sud* had appeared, however, when Morelos began a far more ambitious project in founding *Correo Americano del Sur*, also printed by Idiáquez, who kept the paper going in spite of a "thousand obstacles."³² The paper appeared throughout the greater part of 1813, first under the editorship of José Manuel de Herrera, and then, beginning in May, under Carlos María Bustamante.³³ Its stated objectives were to "counter-act the forces of deception," curtail "the prejudices of ignorance," cause the "light of wisdom" to shine, justify the cause, "glorify the noble partisans" of the revolution,

confound the "haughty insolence" of the royalists, and "exalt the sentiments of patriotism to the utmost degree."³⁴ The *Correo* published news and information about the revolution, manifestoes and proclamations of the leaders, and detailed reports of insurgent victories.³⁵

So far as is known, *Correo Americano del Sur* was the last insurgent periodical published in southern territory. In the fall of 1813 it was moved to Chilpancingo, where its press was used to publish the decrees and resolutions of the Congress. With the approach of royalist forces early in 1814, however, and after the attempt to move the press to Tlacotepec failed, it was captured by the army of José Gabriel de Armijo at Las Animas.³⁶ From that time on Morelos and the other insurgent leaders were pursued so fiercely by the royalists that little time remained for printing activities.

Whether Morelos' press-and-propaganda activities were as effective as he seemed to think is difficult to say; but perhaps he had reasons for believing that such efforts were a forceful weapon. "Circulate these numbers of *Correo Americano*," Morelos ordered Bustamante on one occasion, "and spread them throughout enemy territory so that the *chaquetas* may be swayed, and so that they may know the record of our achievements."³⁷

Such, then, was the program of reform which Morelos developed and proclaimed in 1812. On completing the conquest of the south with the capture of Acapulco, Morelos was now ready to direct his attention and energies toward the establishment of a new insurgent government which would enact the program into law.

MORELOS' REFORM PROGRAM

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4. *Idem to idem*, November 7, 1812, *ibid.*, IV, 662.
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9. Castillo Negrete, *México en el siglo XIX*, V, 473.
10. Morelos to Rayón, El Veladero, March 29, 1813, Peñafiel, *Ciudades y capitales*, p. 117.
11. Morelos to Liceaga, El Veladero, March 29, 1813, Hernández y Dávalos (ed.), *Colección*, V, 5.
12. *Correo Americano del Sur*, No. 24 (August 5, 1813), in Genaro García (ed.), *Documentos históricos mexicanos*, IV, 185.
13. Diary of Ignacio Rayón, July 5, 1813, in *Apuntes para la biografía del Exmo. Sr. Lic. D. Ignacio López Rayón*, p. 35.
14. Decree of Morelos, Oaxaca, January 29, 1813, *Morelos documentos*, I, 156-57.
15. Alamán, *Historia de México*, III, 559, 575.
16. Alamán published the incomplete, abbreviated Martiñena text of the "Medidas políticas," which has stronger socio-economic overtones than does the complete Humana text, which sets forth a military plan. Although Hernández y Dávalos published both texts (the Martiñena copy carries Morelos' signature, while the other is unsigned), Mexican historians until recently have used the Martiñena copy almost exclusively, with the result that historians of the Díaz period condemn Morelos, while those of the Revolution praise him for his political and social radicalism. Still other Mexican historians, notably Ezequiel A. Chavez (*Morelos*, p. 206) have denied Morelos' authorship of the "Medidas políticas." Alfonso Teja Zabre has refuted this in his recent biography (*Vida de Morelos*, Chapter XX), and is probably closer to the truth than anyone else in his contention that the document was written by Morelos, and was intended to be a military plan of destruction and devastation. But the controversy over the document still rages.
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19. Decree of Morelos, San Pablo Huizo, February 10, 1813, *ibid.*, IV, 857-58.
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MORELOS OF MEXICO

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32. Morelos to Bustamante, Chilpancingo, October 21, 1813, Genaro García (ed.), *Documentos para la historia de México*, XII, 49.
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35. See the analysis of the most significant numbers in J. M. Miguel y Vergés, *La independencia mexicana y la prensa insurgente*, pp. 171-76.
36. Joaquín Fernández de Córdoba, "Verdadero origen de la imprenta en Morelia," *Boletín de la Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística*, LXII (July, 1946), 134-35; 185-87.
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SERVANT OF THE NATION

JOSE MARIA MORELOS, priest, military commander, political and social reformer, principal leader of Mexican independence, and "Servant of the Nation," as he styled himself, was approaching his forty-eighth birthday as he completed the conquest of Acapulco and departed for Chilpancingo to organize the new national congress. There was little in his physical appearance to suggest greatness, for he was of small stature and stocky build; being only slightly more than five feet in height, and weighing perhaps 160 to 170 pounds, he was not particularly imposing in appearance. His facial features were rough and coarse, with warts and moles much in evidence, and there was a large scar across his nose from a bad fall sustained in boyhood days. His coloring and complexion were dark; his skin and eyes were deep brown; and he had thick lips, and eyebrows which were heavy and joined. His body had been conditioned by a lifetime spent almost entirely in the field and outdoors, but he suffered greatly from malaria and migraine headaches. It has been suggested that the handkerchief he wore about his head, and with which he is almost always pictured, may have been worn to alleviate the pain from his headaches. But it may have been only to keep the hair out of his eyes or his brow free of perspiration. He suffered numerous injuries from accidents and falls: his correspondence from 1811 to 1813 makes frequent references to his maladies and general bad health.¹ He was constantly plagued with attempts on his life and threats to his person. He was twice warned that he was about to be poisoned,² and once Rayón wrote him that a man with a big belly was coming to seize him and turn him over to the viceroy. But this threat, like all the others, he received with his characteristic calm, and at the bottom of Rayón's note of

warning, Morelos quipped: "There is no one here more big-bellied than I am, and my ailments are wearing me out."³

In a country which through its history has been plagued by ambitious men who have sought high positions solely for self-aggrandizement and personal glory and reward, Morelos was a conspicuous exception. It was characteristic of him, for example, to reject the title of Supreme Highness which the Congress of Chilpancingo sought to confer on him, in favor of the more modest one, Servant of the Nation. He was scrupulously honest, and though millions of pesos passed through his hands, he applied virtually all of the money to financing the revolution, keeping only small amounts to take care of his meager personal needs. A man of simple habits and tastes all his life, he loved hard work, expected it of his associates and subordinates, and scorned artificiality, sophistication, idleness, and vice. Aside from several indiscretions in his private life in violation of his priestly vows, his only indulgence was an occasional glass of *aguardiente* and a cigar.

I have tried to work with understanding [Morelos wrote to one of his officers] for the people have placed their fate in my hands. I cannot deceive them because a thousand hells would not be sufficient to punish me for my wickedness. It is not my wish to abandon them, nor to sacrifice them. I am a Christian, and I have a soul to save; therefore, I have sworn to sacrifice myself for my country and my religion before breaking my oath on a single point.⁴

The idea of calling a national congress of provincial representatives may have occurred to Morelos a month or so before he issued his decree of June 28, 1813, which set forth regulations for its formation. In April, it will be remembered, he had been willing for Rayón's junta to serve as a nucleus, with the total number increased to seven or nine, the additional members to be elected by the provinces.⁵ But so great was his disgust with the continuous bickering and quarreling among Rayón and his associates that in May Morelos discarded his original plan in favor of a national congress of his own creation. He therefore

suggested to Rayón that the five junta members should meet in Chilpancingo on September 8, 1813, and there its members "either were to be re-elected or removed," so that "individual differences could be eliminated."⁶ Morelos was thus offering Rayón and his associates membership in the national congress, but only on condition that they would be willing to cooperate.

An insurgent congress was not a new idea in the era of Mexican independence, for Hidalgo had suggested one, as had Rayón in his constitution of 1812. But much of the credit for causing such a body to become reality belongs to Carlos María Bustamante, who convinced Morelos of the great need for it.

Europe is aware of the justice of our revolution; [wrote Bustamante] the parliaments of London and the government of Washington eagerly desire to assist in a task where the oppression of humanity is involved, as well as to promote the trade and happiness of all states. They have not shown any generosity toward us, however, because an organization which should represent our will, and a means through which those powers could negotiate, is lacking. Favorable results have been obtained in Caracas and Buenos Aires because assemblies have been established there by reason of the desires of their political leaders, who have set an example for us in the organization of institutions which represent the sentiments of those peoples.

America cannot be free as long as the provinces do not support this idea; foreign powers cannot recognize us as long as an august body where sovereignty may be deposited is missing. . . .

The day of the bloody war — the war of the sword — has passed; we are about to enter into an era which will be characterized by cunning and diplomacy, and which will be extremely more dangerous than before. We should present, therefore to our oppressors a congress of learned men (*Un Congreso de Sabios*), so that we can win the respect of foreign powers and the confidence of the people of this continent.⁷

In a decree of June 28, 1813, addressed to the provinces, Morelos issued instructions for naming electors, who were to assemble in Chilpancingo on September 8, to select the members of the new congress. A subdelegate in each parish, it stated, should call together the *curas*, army officers, and principal citi-

zens of each parish; and on a given day, they were to assemble in the provincial capital and select a representative by a plurality of votes.⁸ Subsequently, Morelos declared that the executive power was to be exercised by a generalissimo, chosen from the four captains-general by insurgent officers of the rank of colonel and above, and approved by the congress.⁹ This was the same arrangement Rayón had proposed in 1812, when no doubt he was thinking of holding the position himself, but now in 1813 the situation was vastly different from that of the previous year.

Morelos' measures were naturally opposed by Rayón as illegal and despotic, but his protests had little effect. Morelos countered that Rayón was only injuring the cause with his bickering, and proceeded to justify his own course in the following letter to his rival:

By your last two letters . . . , I can see that in your assumption of all of the powers under the pretext of saving the country, you desire only its death; you can see that it is in danger, but you try only to tie the hands of all its citizens, and to make it impossible for anyone to take the steps which are necessary. . . .

There arises the opinion, which you have formed unjustly, that the abrogation of your authority should be attributed to me, by virtue of the fact that I am favored with a preponderance of bayonets. . . .

The congress must be confirmed in Chilpancingo, God willing, in this coming month, and in any way possible, because I called it four months ago. By this act you will not be ignored; the country will not perish; neither will the said assembly lack legality, nor will it be ridiculed by our enemies, as you contend.

Let us not lose the means to free ourselves from our common mother, in order that your rights might be saved; the only other alternative is to declare the power which resides in your person illegitimate, because that which is reduced to personal ends cannot be legitimate; it only hinders the progress of the country in obtaining its independence.

I am opposed to pretentiousness; I will be content with any fate that will be useful to religion and in favor of my fellowman. I do not seek the presidency; my functions will cease when the congress is established; and I will restrict myself to the very honorable epithet of humble Servant of the Nation.¹⁰

The number of electors who had arrived in Chilpancingo by September 8, 1813, was disappointingly small. Since Morelos desired to proceed with the formation of the congress without further delay, he drew up on September 11 a *Reglamento*, or plan of government, composed of fifty-nine articles, which according to Bancroft, amounted practically to a constitution.¹¹

Recognizing the principle of separation of powers, it declared that the executive authority should be exercised by a Generalissimo, elected for life from the list of insurgent generals by a plurality of votes of the army officers holding the rank of colonel or above. The powers of the Generalissimo included the right to initiate legislation which he considered necessary to the public welfare. The legislative power was to be vested in a Congress, composed of *propietarios* chosen by the electors, and *suplentes* nominated by Morelos himself. Any *vocal*, or member of Congress, could propose projects for consideration, such proposals to become law with the approval of a majority of the members. Their terms were to be no longer than four years. Officials of the Congress included a president and vice-president, rotated among the *vocales* each four months, and two secretaries, to be appointed by Morelos for four-year terms. The judicial power was to remain vested for the time being in existing tribunals, but at some future date, there was to be a tribunal of five members for civil cases, and an ecclesiastical tribunal of from three to five to promote the welfare of the Church and decide cases involving the clergy.

The persons of the deputies were declared sacred and inviolable; deputies were not permitted to leave for military or other outside duties. Charges of disloyalty to country and religion on the part of any official were to be handled by a special junta of five persons elected by the five provinces nearest the seat of Congress. Finally, there was Article XVII — Morelos' recommendation for a declaration of independence from Spain without reference to any monarch.¹²

On September 13 at a meeting of the Tecpán electors held for

the purpose of choosing their deputy to the Congress, Morelos' secretary, Juan Nepomuceno Rosains, read the *Reglamento*; and on the following day at a second meeting of the electors, together with certain officials and natives of Chilpancingo, Rosains read the celebrated document written by Morelos entitled "Sentiments of the Nation," which outlined his political and social program for the consideration of the Congress. Rosains also announced the names of those who were to compose that body. In the class of *propietarios* were the members of the old Supreme Junta — Ignacio Rayón for the province of Guadalajara, José Sixto Verduzco for Michoacán, and José María Liceaga for Guanajuato, as well as José Murguía y Galardi for Oaxaca (he had been chosen fifth member of Rayón's junta by an Oaxaca assembly), and José Manuel Herrera, who was chosen deputy for Tecpán by the electors of that province. Appointed as *suplentes* were Carlos María Bustamante for Mexico, José María Cos for Vera Cruz, and Andrés Quintana Roo for Puebla.¹³ Since Morelos' Congress included those who had been members of the Supreme Junta, Rayón always considered it to be a mere extension of the earlier body. It will be noted also that Morelos named all of the deputies, with the exception of those from Oaxaca and Tecpán, and that there was hardly a chance in those two places for a candidate to be chosen who was not in sympathy with the Morelos program. In hand-picking his Congress, Morelos has been charged with failing to establish a democratic regime when he had every opportunity to do so. But this criticism is justified only so long as it can be assumed that Mexico was ready for democracy in 1813.¹⁴

The Congress was installed on September 14, and began its work with the consideration of Morelos' "Sentiments of the Nation." After declaring that "America is free and independent of Spain and any other nation, government, or monarchy," the "Sentiments" stated that "the Catholic religion shall be the only religion, without the toleration of any other," that its ministers should be supported by the *diezmos* and the first fruits, that

the people should not be required to pay any obligations other than devotional contributions and gifts, and that the dogma should be sustained by the hierarchy of the Church, consisting of Pope, bishops, and *curas*, "because every plant which God did not plant should be pulled out."¹⁵

As to his political, social, and economic system, Morelos stated in the "Sentiments" that sovereignty emanated directly from the people but was deposited in their representatives, and that the powers of government should be divided into the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Government offices should be held exclusively by Americans; no foreigners should be admitted other than artisans who were able to instruct in their professions.¹⁶ Slavery was to be declared abolished, as well as all distinctions among classes. Laws should cover all except certain privileged bodies, because "the good law is superior to all men, and those laws which our Congress should enact should be such as to compel devotion and patriotism, regulate poverty and destitution, increase the wages of the poor, better his condition, and eliminate ignorance and violence." The ports of the nation should be open to friendly powers, but foreign merchants should not be allowed to go into the interior, nor should foreign soldiers be permitted on national soil. Property should be respected; torture should be abolished, as well as the *alcabala*, the monopolies, and the tribute. The war was to be financed with a duty of 10 per cent on imports, together with "another tax on foreign merchandise," a direct contribution of 5 per cent on rents, and careful administration of goods confiscated from the Europeans. Lastly, the day of December 12 should be celebrated in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and September 16 should be solemnized as the anniversary of the beginning of the independence movement.¹⁷

After the installation of the members and the reading of the "Sentiments of the Nation," Morelos delivered an address entitled "Reasoning of General Morelos on the Opening of the Congress of Chilpancingo," which Carlos Bustamante had pre-

pared and sent to him from Oaxaca. Its most significant passages are given here as follows:

Our enemies have been obliged to reveal to us certain important truths; we were not ignorant of them, but the despotism of the government under whose yoke we have been oppressed attempted to hide them from us. They are: that sovereignty resides essentially in the people; that having been transmitted to monarchs, by their absence, death, or captivity, it falls back on the people; that they are free to reorganize their political institutions in any way which is agreeable to them; and that no people have the right to subjugate another. . . .

These oppressed people, similar to the Israelites, who worked for Pharaoh, are tired of suffering, and they lift their hands to the sky, and make their clamoring heard before the throne of the Eternal. Taking pity on their misfortunes, He opens His mouth and decrees that Anahuac should be free. In the town of Dolores this voice was heard, and it was like a thunderbolt. . . .

Spirits of Las Cruces, of Aculco, Guanajuato, Calderon, Zitácuaro, and Cuautlal Spirits of Hidalgo and Allende should be witness to our flood of tears! You, who govern this august assembly, accept the most solemn pledge which we make to you today — that we shall die or save the country. But we do not undertake or execute anything for our own welfare if we do not decide beforehand to protect religion and its institutions, to conserve properties, to respect the rights of the people, to forget our mutual misunderstandings, and to work incessantly for fulfilling these sacred objectives. . . . Spirits of Moctezuma, Cacamatzín, Cuauhtémoc, Xicotencatl, and Caltzontzín, take pride in this august assembly, and celebrate this happy moment, in which your sons have congregated to avenge your insults. After August 12, 1521, comes September 8, 1813. The first date tightened the chains of our slavery in Mexico-Tenochtitlán; the second one broke them forever in the town of Chilpancingo. . . . We are therefore going to restore the Mexican empire, and improve the government; we are going to be the spectacle of the cultured nations which will observe us; finally, we are going to be free and independent.¹⁸

Meeting in the parish church on the next day, September 15, the Congress designated José Sixto Verduzco as temporary president, and considered the election of the Generalissimo, who was to exercise the executive power. To the surprise of

no one, Morelos received the unanimous approval of the army officers of the rank of colonel and above and the subsequent approval of the Congress.¹⁹ But when the position was formally offered to him, he refused to accept it, stating that he believed it to be superior to his capacity.²⁰ Some would argue that his rejection of the office was a feint on his part, caused by the fear that he would be accused of being power thirsty; but it is more likely that he was motivated by genuine abnegation and a sincere desire to indicate that he had not created an executive position in the expectancy that he was to fill it. Moreover, he may have been uncertain of his support, and therefore may have delayed to ascertain how much of a following he had before he accepted. President Verduzco and the army officers declared that Morelos should be forced to accept to satisfy the unanimous desire of the people, while Quintana Roo insisted that Congress should avoid hasty action and take more time for deliberation. The dispute was settled only when it was suggested that the Congress should adjourn for two hours and then announce its verdict. On the passage of the motion, Morelos retired to the sacristy of the church and smoked a cigar while he waited.²¹

At the expiration of one hour the members entered the sacristy and presented Morelos with a document which stated that they had conducted deliberations with the people of the town, to whose acclamations they had acceded in declaring that Morelos' renunciation was inadmissible. The Supreme Congress, it continued, in the exercise of its sovereign powers, would compel his immediate acceptance of the position, recognize him as the first military chief, and reserve the right to dictate the title which it chose to give him.²² "Thus," wrote Lucas Alamán, "was the legislative power subdued before military force. Sad presage of fate which awaited future congresses!"²³

Morelos replied that in view of the public demonstrations and his respect for the authority of the Congress, he would accept, with four conditions: first, that should the troops of a

MORELOS OF MEXICO



J. Orsini

THE STATESMAN

foreign power invade the country, they should not be allowed to approach the seat of the Congress;²⁴ second, that on his death, command should devolve temporarily on the military chief next highest in rank until an election should decide the permanent successor; third, that the Congress must not deny him assistance in money and men which he might need, nor exempt any privileged classes from service; and fourth, that in the event of the death of the Generalissimo, the unity of the army and the people should be maintained, and established authorities recognized.²⁵

After the Congress had accepted these conditions, Morelos assumed command, taking an oath "to defend at the cost of his life the Catholic religion, the purity of the Most Holy Mary, the rights of the American nation, and to discharge to the best of his ability the office which the nation had conferred on him." Rosains then took the oath as secretary to the executive power, and the session of September 15 closed by rendering thanks to the Supreme Being with a solemn *Te Deum*.²⁶ The Guadalupe of Mexico City sent congratulations, adding that a number of delegates who had been elected to the Cortes of Spain had voiced a preference for serving in the Congress rather than in the illegitimate assembly at Cádiz.²⁷

It was more than a month, however, before the Congress could open for regular business, since Rayón, Bustamante, Liceaga, and Cos were still absent. Morelos continued to inform them of developments and urge their presence in Chilpancingo, but it was late October before all had arrived. Meanwhile, Morelos in his capacity as Generalissimo retired the three members of the Supreme Junta from command with the rank and honors of captains-general without salary;²⁸ he then appointed Mariano Matamoros as commander-in-chief for the provinces of Tecpán, Oaxaca, Mexico, Puebla, and Vera Cruz; and Manuel Muñiz as commander-in-chief for Michoacán, Guanajuato, Guadalajara, Zacatecas, and San Luis Potosí.²⁹

The Congress, having been assured by October 25 that all members would likely arrive, made preparations to hold regular

sessions, fixed the hours for meeting, and declared that any individual had the right to submit any plan or project for congressional consideration, and that he might attend the sessions if he desired.³⁰ By the end of the month all members had taken their seats, except Rayón, who on the last day of the month appeared at the nearby hacienda of Chichihualco. He was received by a body of officials sent by the Congress under Antonio de Sesma, and was escorted to Chilpancingo in great pomp and ceremony on November 2. Quintana Roo and others were on hand to welcome him to Chilpancingo, and on November 4, after he had been administered the oath of office, Rayón took his seat in Congress.³¹

The Congress took up for discussion Morelos' "Sentiments of the Nation" and decided that the first order of business should be a declaration of independence from Spain. Morelos addressed the body and read a proclamation he had written entitled "A Short Plea which the Servant of the Nation makes to his Fellow-Citizens."

We are free by the grace of God [it began] and we are independent of the arrogance and tyranny of Spain, with her extraordinary Cortes, which is so lacking in reason. . . . Europeans, do not burden yourselves any longer creating petty governments. America is free, even though we do not seem to be. . . . I have spoken to you in simple and intelligible words; heed this advice and understand once and for all that although he who speaks to you may die, the nation will not change her system for many centuries.³²

On November 6 the Congress approved Carlos María Bustamante's draft of a declaration of independence in spite of the protests of Rayón, who insisted that Hidalgo's fall was caused largely by desertions which came as the result of too much talk about independence. Rayón declared that there was still considerable respect for Ferdinand VII, particularly among the Indians, who had been accustomed for so long to venerate monarchy.³³ Nevertheless, the Congress ordered that Bustamante's document be published without further delay; it then drafted

a manifesto to enlist the support of the Mexican people for independence and the revolutionary effort. Significant portions of Bustamante's Declaration of Independence are as follows:

The Congress of Anáhuac, legally installed in the city of Chilpancingo, of America Septentrional by its provinces, solemnly declares in the presence of God, judge and moderator of dominions, and author of society, who creates those dominions and removes them according to the unalterable designs of His disposition, that under the present circumstances in Europe, it has recovered the exercise of its usurped sovereignty; that in view of this, Spain remains defeated forever, and therefore the dependence on the Spanish throne should be dissolved; that it is the judge of the establishment of laws which are necessary for better government and domestic happiness, for making war and peace, for establishing alliances with monarchies and republics of the old continent, as well as for celebrating concordats with the Highest Roman Pontificate for the rule of the Apostolic Roman Catholic church, and for sending ambassadors and consuls; that it does not profess nor recognize any religion other than the Catholic, nor will it tolerate or permit the use of any other in public or in secret; that it will protect with all its powers the purity of the faith and its dogmas, and the preservation of the regular orders. . . .

There followed a statement that the Congress would consider anyone guilty of high treason who should oppose directly or indirectly the independence of Mexico which had thus been declared.³⁴

If Morelos expected the Congress to proceed with the confirmation of his social and economic program at Chilpancingo, he was to be disappointed. Other than adopting a decree abolishing slavery and one restoring the Society of Jesus for educating youth in Christian doctrine and propagating the faith in the frontier regions, little was done.³⁵ But the cornerstone of a Mexican nation had been laid at Chilpancingo; and perhaps in time the Congress would incorporate the Morelos program in a written constitution for an independent Mexico. The completion of the structure, however, required that the insurgents gain additional victories on the battlefield. Thus the year 1814

promised to be a critical one for the Mexican revolution now being waged for the declared purpose of independence.

On November 7, 1813, the day after Mexican independence was proclaimed, Morelos and his army set out for Valladolid, the place of his birth, and the cradle of the revolution.

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SERVANT OF THE NATION

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MORELOS IN DECLINE

MORELOS' great desire to conquer Valladolid was based in part on sentiment, as well as on practical military considerations. Since the city was the place of his birth and the cradle of the revolution, it seemed fitting that the new insurgent government should be established there; moreover, his military information had convinced him that the city was inadequately defended and could be taken readily without great losses.¹ Without revealing his plans, Morelos, in the capacity of Generalissimo, summoned Nicolás Bravo, Hermenegildo Galeana, and Mariano Matamoros to hasten to Chilpancingo with their forces, and ordered various other commanders to protect the Congress and to maintain insurgent control around Oaxaca and Acapulco.

On November 7, the day following the promulgation of the Declaration of Independence, Morelos left Chilpancingo, proceeded in the direction of Tlalchapa, Cutzamala, and Huetamo, through that part of the *tierra caliente* he had known so well in former days as a priest, and arrived at his parish of Carácuaro in the first week of December.² It was his first visit in more than three years, and his heart was moved, writes Bustamante characteristically, when his eyes fell upon his old parishioners, the parish house where he had lived, and the church which he had built with his own hands. Here he remained for several days, occasionally stopping before an image of the Lady of Guadalupe to pray for victory on the forthcoming venture.³

From Carácuaro the insurgents passed to Chupio and Tacámbaro, arriving on the outskirts of Valladolid on December 22. By that time Morelos had assembled the largest army he commanded during his entire career, well equipped with provisions and thirty cannon, and numbering more than six thousand men.⁴

On the other hand, the Valladolid garrison, commanded by Domingo Landazuri, numbered only about eight hundred men, and Morelos lost no time in warning the royalists that he would transform the city into a "theater of horror," and its plazas and streets into "rubbish piles," if the place were not surrendered within three hours.⁵ He also sent a letter to Abad y Queipo, Bishop-elect of Michoacán, denouncing him as an "agent of tyranny," censuring him for fulminating excommunications against the insurgents, and holding him responsible for the evil which would fall on Valladolid should he refuse to deliver the city.⁶ The defenders of the city, however, ignored all demands. As a result, Morelos gave the order to attack, directing the brunt of the insurgent fire against the Zapote gate.

But Morelos had not reckoned with Calleja's ability and energy employed during 1813 to revitalize the royalist effort. While the insurgents were bogged down in the long, drawn-out siege of Acapulco, and while their leaders indulged in petty quarreling as they attempted to form an insurgent government at Chilpancingo, Calleja effectively reorganized the royalist forces, aided by troops recently released from duty in Spain. Having been informed by November 24 of Morelos' movements toward Valladolid, Calleja ordered Ciriaco Llano and Agustín de Iturbide to move by forced marches in defense of the capital of Michoacán. As a result, reinforcements numbering more than three thousand men arrived in time to check the insurgent assault on the Zapote gate, throw back the troops of Bravo and Galeana in disorder and with great losses, and then enter the city in triumph.⁷ This was a terrifying shock to the insurgent leadership, which was unaccustomed to such reverses; Morelos was stunned, and Nicolás Bravo cried like a baby.⁸

At length, Morelos placed Mariano Matamoros in command of insurgent forces, and plans were made for another attack on the city. But before the insurgents could advance, Iturbide attacked. Bustamante writes that the royalists had intercepted an order from Morelos instructing all men below the rank of

captain to paint their faces black so they would not be mistaken for the enemy; whereupon the defenders blackened the faces of several hundred of their forces and marched out of the city as night was coming on, Iturbide leading the vanguard.⁹ Royalist charges threw the insurgents into such confusion that the latter began killing one another, since they were unable to distinguish friend from foe. Panic spread through their ranks, and they fled in all directions. The aspirations of the insurgents and the prestige of Morelos had received a damaging blow.

After the disaster at Valladolid, Morelos retired to Chupio, collected some of his scattered units and marched toward the hacienda of Puruarán, twenty-two leagues southwest of Valladolid, with the forces of Iturbide and Llano in hot pursuit. Perhaps Morelos was too eager for a chance to avenge the catastrophe at Valladolid, for in spite of the warnings of his officers, who urged him to continue the retreat, he decided to make a stand. By the morning of January 5, 1814, the forces of Llano had overtaken the insurgents, and although their resistance was valiant, the royalist artillery scored with telling effect. The battle was over in half an hour. The insurgents were put to flight and driven into a river, where they were cut down by the hundreds. Although the material losses suffered by the insurgents were overwhelming, they were nothing compared with the capture of Mariano Matamoros, whom Bustamante called Morelos' left arm, Galeana being the right.¹⁰ The prisoner was led to Pátzcuaro, placed on exhibition in the plaza, and made to suffer countless indignities as he was brought to Valladolid. There he was tried, degraded, and sentenced to be shot. Although Morelos made a desperate effort to obtain Matamoros' release by offering Calleja two hundred Spaniards in exchange, the sentence was carried out as scheduled two days before Morelos' proposal reached the capital. It probably would have been rejected anyway. Today, a plaque which hangs on the veranda of the Hotel Antonio de Mendoza in Morelia marks the place of execution.¹¹

MORELOS IN DECLINE

From Coyuca, Morelos continued his retreat to Ajuchitlán, on the right bank of the Mescala. There he was able to collect approximately a thousand men who had fled after the disasters at Valladolid and Puruarán. He named as his second-in-command the ambitious Juan Nepomuceno Rosains, much to the disgust not only of Galeana, who was by far the ablest of Morelos' officers, but also of the Congress, which objected to the appointment to high military command of a man almost completely lacking in training and experience. Morelos moved on to Tlacotepec and joined the Congress early in February.¹²

Meanwhile, no sooner had Morelos left for Valladolid in November, 1813, than the contentious spirit among the members of the Congress broke out again. Under the leadership of Ignacio Rayón, who had consistently held that this body was only an extension of the Supreme Junta, the members assumed the executive power and attempted to take over the direction of insurgent governmental affairs.

After Morelos had been defeated in Valladolid [wrote Rosains in his *Relación*] all strength disappeared; all feeling was lost; the opinions of Congress were divided; and the legislative and executive powers fought one another. Men were entrusted with military command who had no experience in exercising it, and a force strong enough to keep them in check was lacking. Each one set aside a territory, made himself master of it, fixed taxes, filled offices, usurped property rights, and took lives. Passions were unleashed; liberty was confused with license and libertinage; and insurgent territory became a chaos of horror and confusion.¹³

As the advancing royalist army of José Gabriel de Armijo approached Chilpancingo, the Congress was forced to flee, and from that time on, it was an itinerant body, pursued relentlessly from place to place by the viceroy's armies. After Rayón, Bustamante, and Crespo retired to Oaxaca, the remaining five — Verduzco, Cos, Herrera, Quintana Roo, and Liceaga — fled to Tlacotepec on January 22, 1814. There Morelos, in disgrace and humiliation, readily surrendered the executive power, and

though he retained his title of Generalissimo, he was prohibited from exercising military command over any forces other than his personal escort, which numbered about one hundred fifty men.¹⁴ The Congress placed military authority in the hands of three commanding generals — Rayón, Cos, and Rosains — who were assigned to the provinces of Tecpán and Oaxaca, Michoacán and Guanajuato, and Puebla and Vera Cruz, respectively. The Congress also assumed political authority and promptly voted to increase its membership to sixteen.¹⁵ Thus, in February, 1814, Morelos held only an empty military title and a seat in the Congress as deputy for Nuevo León; whereas four months before, in September, 1813, his political and military supremacy was unchallenged.

The advancing Armijo could not be stopped. So narrow was the escape of the Congress from Tlacotepec on February 24, that the royalists captured the archives of the Congress, its seal, the correspondence of the Guadalupes, the famous Oaxaca oil painting of Morelos, numerous other personal items (such as his uniforms, sword, and baton), and a number of things which had belonged to Matamoros.¹⁶ After ordering Morelos to the Acapulco area to dismantle the port before it fell into royalist hands, the five remaining members of the Congress fled to the northwest, where they remained in Uruapan for about three months. Perhaps the real reason for sending Morelos to the south coast was to get him out of the way for a while.

At a meeting of Morelos and Galeana at Tecpán, there was so much emotion that Bustamante writes he could not hold back the tears when he heard the details. The two leaders discussed the recent disasters, and Galeana declared that he had become so discouraged that he had decided to abandon the cause and spend the rest of his days in hiding. "All has been lost," he confided to Morelos, "because you have entrusted men to the command of arms who are not deserving of it. I do not know how to write, it is true, but I can attack a camp as well as anyone." Then Morelos tried to console him; he reassured

him of his sincere friendship, and urged him to continue fighting for the cause.¹⁷ Galeana agreed that he would, and the two parted company. Morelos left for Acapulco, while Galeana remained in the area of Tecpán to attack small parties of royalist troops and destroy their supplies. But in a clash near Coyuca, on June 27, Galeana's forces were routed; and in the confusion which followed, Galeana's spirited horse ran under a tree and struck his rider's head against a low branch with such force that the impact threw him unconscious from his saddle to the ground. A royalist soldier then came up to administer a final blow, decapitating the fallen hero. When Morelos received the news, he was horrified: "Both of my arms are gone," he said; "now I am nothing."¹⁸

The port of Acapulco had suffered considerably from inefficient administration and mismanagement from the time it passed under insurgent control in August, 1813. It was reported in January, 1814, that the food problem was so critical, the armament so inadequate, and disease so rampant, that the defense of the fortress was almost impossible.¹⁹ Therefore, when Morelos heard that Armijo was approaching, he retired to Pie de la Cuesta nearby, and gave orders to Isidoro Montes de Oca, on April 9, to reduce the port to ashes.²⁰ Four days later Armijo arrived to find that the place was in ruins, and that Morelos had fled to Tecpán. With Armijo in pursuit, Morelos retired to the northwest, moving along the coast through Petatlán and Zacatula, and leaving a trail of bloody reprisals in his wake as his answer to the execution of Matamoros.²¹ This route was the same he had taken three and a half years before in October and November, 1810, just after he had joined Hidalgo, except that now the direction was reversed. And, it may be added, so also were the circumstances.

In the comparative seclusion of the ranch of Atijo, which had been a part of Morelos' ecclesiastical jurisdiction when he was *cura* of Carácuaro, he remained with his escort until the summer. In subterranean passages under a hill, so it was re-

ported in 1815 by José María Morales, chaplain of the Congress, Morelos imprisoned those ecclesiastics who had incurred his wrath, the most important being Pedro Ramírez, an Augustinian, who had been chaplain of Acapulco. Ramírez had agreed to cooperate in espionage activities for the insurgents, but the Guadalupe of Mexico City revealed that after his arrival there, he had become a spy for Viceroy Calleja. Ordered by the viceroy to conduct espionage activities among the insurgents, he was promptly seized and imprisoned by Morelos.²²

Meanwhile, the insurgent movement had suffered severe reverses in other sectors of Mexico. It will be recalled that when the Congress stripped Morelos of his military power, it entrusted Ignacio Rayón with the defense of Tecpán and Oaxaca, Juan N. Rosains with Puebla and Vera Cruz, and José María Cos with Michoacán and Guanajuato. Rayón set out for Oaxaca, stopped at Huajuapán, and dispatched José de San Martín to supervise the city's administration and organize the defenses. Insurgent rule had become so inefficient and unpopular, however, that when a royalist force under Melchor Alvarez descended upon Oaxaca, the city fell without a shot being fired in its defense. Subsequently, royalist control was restored throughout the entire province.²³

Developments among the insurgents in Puebla and Vera Cruz were marked primarily by a shameful quarrel between Rayón and Rosains. When the insurgent Congress at length determined to put an end to their scandalous conduct by entrusting Francisco Arroyave with provisional command over the territory in dispute, Rosains had him apprehended and shot. As a result, most of those like Guadalupe Victoria who had served Rosains loyally, deserted him in disgust. A similar conflict developed in Michoacán and Guanajuato between Manuel Muñiz, appointed by Morelos in September, 1813, and José María Cos, named by the insurgent Congress. The struggle, however, never reached the proportions it did elsewhere and it largely died out in the

summer of 1814 when Cos surrendered his military authority to devote his entire time to legislative matters.²⁴

Significant developments had been taking place in Spain in the meantime. The defeat in 1813 of the French forces at Victoria and Salamanca by the combined Anglo-Spanish armies under the Duke of Wellington marked the beginning of the end of French rule in Spain. The liberated Ferdinand VII, in March, 1814, crossed the Pyrenees and, encouraged by the recent Bourbon restoration in France, the imposing strength of the party of reaction in Spain, and his warm reception as he made his way back to the capital, proceeded to "turn back the clock" to the absolutism of former days. The Cortes was dissolved, and the institutions of the old regime were re-established, including the Inquisition. A decree of May 4, 1814, restored political affairs to their pre-1808 status and declared all intermediate legislation null and void, including, of course, the Constitution of 1812.²⁵

Ferdinand's restoration and the return of absolutism were received with solemn and imposing celebrations in New Spain, but genuine enthusiasm was lacking. For the moment the restoration tended to consolidate the insurgent effort and divide the royalists. While a conservative faction welcomed the return to reaction, a liberal faction, on the other hand, distressed over the repudiation of constitutional rights, began to look in the direction of the insurgents. Cos and Rayón, in particular, addressed appeals to the liberal party,²⁶ and Morelos urged everyone to repudiate Ferdinand, who, he insisted, was still being dominated by Napoleon, whom Morelos despised.²⁷ But the military fortunes of the insurgents had deteriorated to such a degree that Viceroy Calleja was able to act with determination and decision in preventing the breach within royalist ranks from becoming serious. He threatened the wavering with decrees to shoot all who should take up arms against the government, and offered pardons and generous terms to those who would lay down their arms, including Morelos and the other

leaders, on condition that they would leave the country. But Morelos regarded the offer as only a trick, and wrote Nicolás Bravo instructing him to tell the people to reject it as a false and deceitful measure.²⁸ Nevertheless, Calleja's efforts were in general successful, and the insurgents, as Bancroft points out, "saw with apprehension one group of adherents after another dropping off, with a corresponding decline in their resources."²⁹ As a result, the idea of a written constitution as an expedient to combat the viceroy's efforts and to revitalize a dying cause became apparent to the insurgent leadership, which began to concentrate its efforts in that direction in the summer of 1814.

During May and June, 1814, the Congress continued to flit from place to place, not only to escape the viceroy's forces but, it would seem, to avoid Morelos as well. From Tiripitío, on June 15, the Congress issued a manifesto announcing its determination to continue the struggle, ridiculing the viceroy's charge of discord within insurgent ranks, and stating that work had begun on "a sacred letter of liberty," which would serve as a "lasting monument to convince the world of the dignity of the object to which our steps are directed."³⁰ Morelos, some distance away at Agua Dulce, replied to the Congress in his characteristic manner:

I should say to this body that there is nothing which I am forced to add to the manifesto. . . : first, because it has said everything; and second, because when the master speaks, the servant should keep quiet. This is what my parents and teachers taught me. You should be satisfied with my good behavior, especially with respect to my service to the country. It is well known that after I left the coast, I changed my march three times in search of the Congress to discuss the salvation of the nation in complete accord, and that I suspended my march because of illness contracted in the service of my country; and thus I was deprived of seeing you. Let them say how much wickedness they desire; let them resort to every perversity; I will never change from the system to which I have sworn; neither will I become involved in a discord, which I have tried to avoid so many times. My labors will support these truths, and I will not delay in exposing the

impostors, because there is nothing hidden which is not found, nor secret which is not known.³¹

At length the Congress retired to the relative safety and seclusion of Apatzingán, where, after about four months' labor, the Constitution of 1814 was completed and proclaimed on October 22, 1814. It declared that its "sublime object was to free the nation from foreign domination, and to substitute for the Spanish monarchy a system of administration whereby the nation might enjoy its august and imprescriptible rights." In the greatest of solemnity, members of the Congress took an oath to the new instrument of government, celebrated a mass of thanksgiving, and sang a *Te Deum*. Festivities in a lighter vein followed, and all the members embraced each other and danced with joy, as did Morelos, who forgot his usual reserve for the moment.³²

The Constitution of Apatzingán, which provided for a republican form of government in 242 articles, was signed by the following eleven members of the Congress: José María Liceaga for Guanajuato, José Sixto Verduzco for Michoacán, José María Morelos for Nuevo León, José Manuel Herrera for Tecpán, José María Cos for Zacatecas, José Sotero de Castañeda for Durango, Cornelio Ortiz de Zárate for Tlaxcala, Manuel de Alderete y Soria for Querétaro, Antonio José Moctezuma for Coahuila, José María Ponce de León for Sonora, and Francisco Argandar for San Luis Potosí. Although Carlos María Bustamante, Ignacio Rayón, and Andrés Quintana Roo did not attend the session, they forwarded their suggestions and ideas, and perhaps had a greater influence on the final document than any of those at Apatzingán. Contrary to the general impression, the influence of Morelos was negligible. Judging from a statement which he made during his trial to the effect that he read the document hurriedly and signed only because he believed it to be the best that could be drafted under the circumstances, he may not even have arrived in Apatzingán until the Constitution was nearing completion.³³

It is apparent that the framers of the Constitution were in-

spired by a vast and varied number of sources, including Spanish colonial law, the French constitutions of 1791 and 1795, the Spanish Constitution of 1812, and Rayón's plan of government of 1812. Some provisions, according to Morelos, were borrowed from the Constitution of the United States, although the influence of that document seems slight.³⁴ The most significant features of the Constitution of 1814 include: popular sovereignty, separation of powers, the Catholic religion as a state faith, a weak plural executive, a powerful national legislature, and an indirect system of elections. In providing for the cumbersome executive of three persons, who were chosen by the legislature, and the prohibition against any governmental official exercising military command, the document reveals an intense fear of one-man rule. Since Morelos had consistently favored a strong executive and a dependent legislature, he termed the Constitution of 1814 "impracticable," and said in 1815 that experience indicated that it contained many errors.³⁵ Yet it should be pointed out that the Constitution of 1814 was intended to be provisional only, and was not without merit in many respects. It lifted insurgent morale; it gave legality and dignity to the insurgent regime, particularly in the eyes of foreign powers; and it demonstrated the faith of the insurgent leaders in the ultimate triumph of their cause.³⁶ It alarmed Viceroy Calleja to the degree that to counteract its influence he issued the most drastic measures in retaliation. In that policy, moreover, he was supported by the Inquisition, which charged that the Constitution of 1814 was heretical, and which made liable to the penalty of excommunication anyone who should have it in his possession.³⁷

A significant beginning was made in the matter of establishing the new constitutional government with the election of the plural executive in the persons of Morelos, Cos, and Liceaga. The last named was to serve as the first President for a term of four months. Members of the supreme tribunal were also appointed; but in accordance with a constitutional provision,

the existing Congress was to continue to function as the legislative power so long as the provinces of Mexico remained under royalist control. As it had done before, the Congress assumed its customary role as a mobile body, fleeing from place to place during 1815, barely managing to stay one step ahead of the pursuing royalist forces, and finally coming to rest at Uruapan. There, in the latter part of the summer, the three branches of the government, with the exception of Cos, who was absent from the executive power, were re-united.³⁸

On August 30, Cos, who rather consistently entertained lofty notions of exercising military command, issued a proclamation condemning the Congress as an illegitimate body, and raised the standard of revolt in an effort to overthrow it. The Congress promptly dispatched Morelos to seize the upstart, and to shoot him if he resisted. No sooner had Morelos appeared on the scene than Cos' followers deserted him, and he was "apprehended without the loss of a drop of blood."³⁹ Brought back to Uruapan, he was tried and sentenced to be shot, though the Congress declared the sentence would be mitigated if he showed some evidence of remorse. But Cos remained adamant, even when his casket was brought into the room for him to see. Just then, the clergy of Uruapan and a group of people burst into the room, fell on their knees, and begged that Cos be spared. Among the group was Nicolás Santiago Herrera, *cura* of Uruapan, "the venerable Herrera," as he was called. He had held his post for twenty years or more and was the same ecclesiastic whom Morelos had served as a teacher of grammar and rhetoric in 1797. Cos' sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in the subterranean passages of Atijo, where he remained until liberated by a counter-revolutionary movement two years later.⁴⁰

Because of the ever-increasing royalist pressure, the security of the Congress became more uncertain. Therefore, in the interest of greater safety, and for the purpose of placing the government closer to the eastern ports of Mexico where assistance expected from the United States could be received, the

Congress voted to move eastward to Tehuacán. The execution of this daring project, which involved escorting the Congress to its new home, was entrusted to Morelos. Before the story of that adventure may be told, however, it is necessary to summarize the heroic but futile efforts of the insurgents to obtain help from the outside.

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MORELOS IN DECLINE

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THE QUEST FOR FOREIGN AID

FROM the earliest days of the Mexican struggle for independence, the leaders of the insurgents adopted, as had the Patriots in the American Revolution, the realistic view that the final victory could not be won without substantial assistance from one or more foreign powers. Although the Mexican insurgents carried on some negotiations with Great Britain, their greatest effort was directed toward the United States, which was involved in the War of 1812 with Great Britain from June, 1812, to December, 1814. As one might imagine, the period of the most intensive diplomatic activity of the insurgents in their search for aid came at the time the Morelos movement was declining most rapidly.

Hidalgo made two attempts to secure help from the United States, both of which failed. Pascasio Letona, it will be remembered, was commissioned to negotiate a treaty of alliance and commerce with the United States but was apprehended before he left Mexico. In 1811 Ignacio Aldama was ordered to Texas to get help, but he arrived at San Antonio de Bejar just as a counter-revolutionary movement was in progress, and was promptly seized, tried, and shot.¹

Morelos' first attempt to obtain aid came soon after he learned of the capture of Miguel Hidalgo. In the early part of the summer of 1811 Morelos ordered David Faro, a survivor of the Philip Nolan expedition who had distinguished himself in the fighting around Acapulco, and Mariano Tabares, a native of that port, to journey northward for the purpose of negotiating "an alliance with the United States."² In a letter written on February 17, 1813, Morelos revealed to one of his officials that he had considered the situation so serious in 1811 that he was prepared "to cede the province of Texas" to the United States

in return for assistance.³ The two men started out, it will be remembered, but were stopped by Ignacio Rayón, who had just assumed the leadership of the Hidalgo movement. Instead of allowing the two men to proceed, Rayón gave them military commissions and ordered them to return to the south. When Morelos refused to recognize their commissions, they attempted unsuccessfully to sabotage the revolution. It is interesting to speculate on the probable outcome of the negotiations, had they been conducted; for after the purchase of Louisiana, a lively interest, both official and unofficial, had developed in the United States concerning the Spanish territories which lay on both sides of Louisiana — West Florida on the one hand, and East Texas on the other.

On August 27, 1812, Morelos addressed a letter to Holmes Coffin, captain of the British frigate *Aretusa*, which was anchored at Antón Lizardo near the island of Sacrificios, explaining that an insurgent captain named Agustín Niño had told him that the British commander was interested in negotiating a commercial treaty. An enclosure addressed to "The Admiralty, or to the Ministers of Great Britain" stated that the insurgents would pay cash for guns, pistols, and saber blades.⁴ After considerable delay the British commander finally replied, on December 13, that the information Morelos had received was false, and that he, the British official, had no authorization from his government to negotiate a commercial treaty. But he stated that he would be glad to offer his services in bringing about a reconciliation between insurgent and royalist forces fighting in New Spain.⁵ Morelos did not even bother to answer. He may have suspected that the commander was working for the Spaniards, and that any reconciliation would be prejudicial to the insurgent cause. At any rate, one week after the British commander replied to Morelos, he turned over to the Spanish governor of Vera Cruz all his correspondence with the insurgents.⁶

Morelos in 1815 suggested to another British naval command-

er the possibility of negotiations, but quite understandably this move came to nothing. The naval officer promised that he would try to induce his government to furnish troops and arms if Morelos would pay the millions of pesos which the merchants of Cádiz, Vera Cruz, and Mexico City owed the British!⁷ Since there was little chance that Morelos would assume responsibility for the debts of any Spaniard, it is not surprising that he announced, early in 1813, that he was directing his efforts toward the United States, and that he was seeking a commercial arrangement whereby grain and other products of Mexico could be exchanged for guns from the northern country.⁸

Morelos' conviction that help could be obtained from the United States was in all probability based on information he had received from a young revolutionary in New Orleans named Simón Tadeo Ortiz de Ayala. According to his own story Tadeo Ortiz was a creole of Guadalajara, who had left Mexico in 1810 to continue his education in Europe. After the Napoleonic wars interrupted his plans and the French prevented him from returning to his native land, Tadeo Ortiz escaped to the United States with the intention of entering Mexico through Texas. In Philadelphia in 1811 he met José Alvarez de Toledo, a former deputy from Santo Domingo in the Spanish Cortes, who had championed the American cause with such enthusiasm that he was forced to flee from Cádiz. Alvarez de Toledo arrived in Philadelphia in September, 1811, determined to foment a revolutionary movement in the provinces of northern Mexico.⁹ It was not long before the activities of the two men had aroused the suspicions of the Spanish ambassador to the United States, Luis de Onís, who wrote the commander at Nacogdoches on December 21, 1811, as follows:

There has arrived in this city [of Philadelphia], coming from Cádiz, a youth named Don Tadeo Ortiz, native of Guadalajara of this kingdom. His conduct here has been very suspicious, for he has joined with the fugitive ex-deputy of the Cortes, Don José Alvarez de Toledo, who has published a burning and libelous denunciation

designed to discredit the legitimate government and to promote insurrection in Spain's dominions in America. Tadeo Ortiz is going to New Orleans, and I am assured that he carries papers written by insurgents in Spain for *Cura Hidalgo* and the other revolutionary leaders there. I have advised the Spanish consul in New Orleans to watch his behavior and to keep you advised. . . . I will give him a passport, but instead of having the customary signature, it will have a mark under the word "gratis," so that you may identify this suspicious individual. Don Tadeo Ortiz is twenty-two years of age, of slender build, medium stature, dark complexion, with black hair and eyes. Do not be surprised if some papers of Toledo are found among those carried by Ortiz. . . .¹⁰

Tadeo Ortiz arrived in New Orleans early in 1812, remained in that area for more than a year, and lost no time in establishing contacts with the Mexican insurgents — Morelos, Rayón, and the Guadalupe of Mexico City. A copy of the manifesto of Alvarez de Toledo which Luis de Onís had mentioned was forwarded by Tadeo Ortiz to the Guadalupe, who sent it to Morelos. Although the following letter from Tadeo Ortiz to Morelos was intercepted, it is typical of several which undoubtedly reached insurgent hands. This one, dated New Orleans, June 18, 1812, is as follows:

The American nation is powerful and respected. It will be able to give all the necessary aid at the moment that a deputy with the proper credentials presents himself, and whenever a point by land or sea is secured for the establishment of communications. It appears that this nation will declare war against Britain. This will be very important for us and our cause, for this nation will give not only arms, but even troops if necessary, as well as vessels for our ports and coasts. The political aims of this government with respect to the Spanish American nations include alliances with them as soon as they become independent, for in this manner, they will gain greater respect from Europe. I am informed that this government is disposed to give help in the form of a promise, if it cannot be it in any other way, providing that there is a government, even a temporary one, with which it can deal. It states that while one is not established there is not much hope for the successful results which it desires. . . .

Everyone desires a point by sea or by land so that they can com-

municate with Mexico. You should devote most of your attention to this matter. If that point is obtained, it will decide the issue of independence, for in that way we can introduce arms and everything else which is necessary, all of which this country has in great abundance. Moreover, a deputy should be sent to start negotiations. He not only should be wise, prudent, judicious, but affable, courteous, and well-educated. He should have full powers to deal with the agents of foreign governments which desire our friendship. I consider myself unworthy of such a post, but I have friends who are experienced in matters of diplomacy who hold me in esteem. If the matter of sending a deputy is approved, I would be deeply grateful if you did not forget me for one of the inferior commissions. I am not desirous of power; I wish to serve my country.¹¹

Morelos delayed his reply for more than a year, probably because he was awaiting the outcome of developments in Texas, where royalist forces had crushed two attempts to overthrow viceregal authority in the period from 1810 to 1813.¹² Therefore, when Morelos received news of a third overwhelming insurgent failure in Texas, this time sustained by Tadeo Ortiz' friend, José Alvarez de Toledo, he decided to send Tadeo elsewhere to secure help for the Mexican revolution. According to the account of this youthful revolutionary idealist, he was commissioned by Morelos late in 1813 as diplomatic agent to New Granada to obtain weapons, boats, financial assistance, and a treaty of alliance. Tadeo Ortiz embarked at New Orleans, and before he arrived at Cartagena a year later, he had encountered and survived one harrowing experience after another, vividly described in his "Relación general de mi viaje."¹³ He was almost always without money; frequently he was without food; he was sick much of the time and almost died once; he was in prison for a period of time; and his adventures involved him in a countless number of scrapes in Cuba, Santo Domingo, Haiti, and Jamaica. In Port au Prince he decided to burn his personal papers, including his diplomatic credentials and orders, to prevent them from falling into enemy hands. By preserving fragments of the documents to aid his memory, he planned at

THE QUEST FOR FOREIGN AID

some later date to draft facsimiles of the originals. One of the documents which he reconstructed in that way was his commission to New Granada, dated "Guaxaca," November 29, 1813, and signed by "Manuel Morelos, General in Chief of Mexico." It is given here as follows:

I have received two letters from you dated New Orleans whose contents give me much joy, not only because of the news you sent, but also because of the information that there are patriots in the United States of such great merit, and that they may be as useful as our needs demand. Your observations gave me much joy, as did the commission which you requested. Considering the good which will come to Mexico, and the great service which you can make for our country, I did not hesitate a moment to commission you Agent of Foreign Affairs and Provisional Deputy relating to the Independent Governments of Meridional America, especially when I heard such good reports about you and your family.

The many affairs and difficulties, however, did not provide me a secure means of sending you your commission, nor the funds with which to carry it out. At that time I was waiting for results from the province of Texas, for I had utilized the means of communicating with that province so that I could send associates to you with sufficient powers and money to fulfill their commissions with ability and honor. The misfortune in the above-mentioned province, however, caused me to change my plans, and because I took the port of Acapulco a short time later, I decided to try to communicate with Panama and the provinces of Popayán and Quito in the belief that they had been taken over by the new kingdom of Granada. The lack of ships did not permit me to obtain any information on that matter, and since I lacked news from those parts, I lost hope of carrying out my project for a direct and safe means of communication so that I could send you funds.

Adjusting myself to the critical circumstances, however, I have decided to grant you provisional powers, and to name you Agent of Foreign Affairs and Provisional Deputy to the Independent Governments of Caracas and the new kingdom of Granada. I am sending you a letter for the leaders of those republics, together with powers, credentials and instructions which you will observe in every treaty and agreement made with those governments, or with any other friends of our independence.

The principal aim of your commission is to solicit the friendship of those countries, to establish communication, to inform them of the state of our revolution, and to obtain their resources for the formation of an expedition of their privateers so that we can receive their help and establish commercial relations with them. . . . We hope that they will give us a loan to the credit of the Mexican government, and that they will send us 15,000 guns, if it is possible, by way of the South Sea, or by the North Sea to the port nearest our provinces of Tabasco or Yucatán; but if the said governments do not furnish the said loan, or cannot use the ports of the South Sea, we hope that they will give you enough for a trip to North America or to the European colonies in America. Please report to me with regard to your acceptance of these powers, your time of departure, and anything in general regarding your affairs which can be communicated to me.¹⁴

Tadeo Ortiz at length, in late 1814, arrived in Cartagena, as the revolution in New Granada was at ebb tide. He made his way to Tunja and Santa Fé de Bogotá, and addressed a large volume of correspondence to Simón Bolívar, pleading for an audience and a chance to present his case. But the revolutionaries of New Granada viewed his credentials with suspicion and concluded that he was a spy. Bolívar could have done little for his Mexican revolutionary brothers anyway, for he was being pursued relentlessly by the forces of General Pablo Morillo. At length, Tadeo Ortiz was captured, and until he returned to his native land in 1822, he remained outside the main stream of events in Mexico.¹⁵

Although the Guadalupe continued to insist during the latter part of 1813 that assistance was imminent,¹⁶ Morelos was not so optimistic. In those dark days of 1814 he called on his Anglo-American compatriot and expert on gunpowder, Peter E. Bean, and ordered him to the United States "to bring on a campaign against the province of Texas, and . . . to make some provision for a supply of arms."¹⁷ Bean relates how he left Oaxaca with two thousand pesos and journeyed to Tehuacán, where the people there raised ten thousand more for him. He proceeded to Puente del Rey, remained one night in the camp of Guadalupe

Victoria, and continued on to Nautla, a little town on the coast north of Vera Cruz. There he found an abandoned schooner, which he attempted to make seaworthy enough for a trip to New Orleans. He watched a fight a short distance offshore between a British brig and the *Tigre*, a privateer which had as one of its passengers Joseph Amable Humbert, a veteran of the Napoleonic wars and an ambitious pirate. The *Tigre* vanquished its foe, but the crew got so drunk in celebrating the victory that the craft was beached about six miles north of Nautla. Bean hastened to the scene, found some of his friends on board, learned that the Spaniards at Vera Cruz had promised the British captain two thousand pesos to capture the schooner, and discovered for the first time that the United States and Great Britain were at war. Bean sent for his schooner and transported everyone, including Humbert, to Nautla.¹⁸

When Humbert arrived in Nautla, the insurgent commanders hailed him with great delight. They apparently thought he could help them and little suspected that he was only a pirate.¹⁹ He came at the time when the quarrel between Rayón and Rosains over the military jurisdiction of Vera Cruz was at its height; so when Bean set sail for New Orleans on his schooner, Father José Antonio Pedroza who supported Rayón, and Juan Pablo Anaya who supported Rosains, prepared to leave for New Orleans with Humbert on the *Tigre*.²⁰

New Orleans, which had been under the American flag for a little more than a decade, was still a frontier outpost beyond the furthest reaches of law and order, and the ordinary processes of civilization; therefore it was still a favorite hangout for the restless, the adventurous, the scheming, the intriguing, and the rebellious. Moreover, in the months after Bean and the others arrived in New Orleans in September, 1814, there was even more restlessness and excitement in the air than usual because of the preparations for defense that General Andrew Jackson was making against the anticipated British invasion.²¹

Factors of self-interest and personal rivalries nullified much

of the effort to get help for the Mexican revolution. Humbert had never been anything other than a pirate who was seeking opportunities to advance himself. Father Pedroza disagreed with and opposed Anaya. Moreover, in November, another person injected himself into the picture — one who was well known to New Orleans and the Louisiana frontier, José Alvarez de Toledo.

The activities of the Mexican insurgents in New Orleans were suspended with the landing of British forces, but they were promptly resumed after the American victory on January 8, 1815. Bean, Anaya, and Toledo began to cooperate to some extent in formulating plans which would help the Mexican revolution. In February, 1815, Toledo established contact with the Mexican Congress and revealed his plans. He had several hundred men under arms in preparation for an attack on the northern frontier of Mexico, and he had enlisted the services of an excellent sea captain, Julius Caesar Amigoni, who agreed to maintain communications between New Orleans and Mexico. The insurgent Congress, on the other hand, was expected to furnish funds, letters of marque, officers, and above all, an experienced diplomat with powers to conclude a treaty with the United States and to deal with foreign nations. Copies of Toledo's plan were addressed to the Mexican Congress, to Morelos, Rayón, and Cos. Bean was ordered to carry the letters to Mexico aboard Amigoni's schooner, the *Aguila*, to proceed to Nautla, establish contact with the Congress, and return as soon as possible with the funds and the diplomatic agent.²²

Bean set sail from New Orleans late in February, arrived safely in Nautla, and set out with six companions on a journey of six hundred miles through enemy territory to meet with the insurgent Congress. Bean found Morelos at the hacienda of Puruarán, and recorded the interview in his Memoir as follows:

Morelos asked me what good news I brought from the United States. I related to him how I got there, and what I had done. I told him the United States was our friend and well-wisher; but since it

THE QUEST FOR FOREIGN AID

was at war with Great Britain at the time, it might not be able to do much for us. It was then agreed to send an ambassador to the United States, and that I should return with him. 25,000 pesos was all the money that could be raised for the purpose.²³

In the meantime, Anaya had fallen into Toledo's disfavor and had left for Mexico late in March, accompanied by John Hamilton Robinson, a St. Louis physician, who had been active in the Southwest since his days with Zebulon Pike. Although José María Morales, the chaplain of the insurgent Congress who was later captured and tried with Morelos, declared that Anaya had brought three hundred muskets to Mexico,²⁴ Morelos denied the story, and said that Anaya had never been able to accomplish anything. Morelos also declared that he considered Robinson either as an oddity or a spy, inasmuch as he had a passport but no credentials. He added, however, that he had issued Robinson a commission to take Pensacola in the name of the revolution, and had given him a thousand pesos for expenses, but that the results of the expedition were still unknown to him, since Robinson had not left Huetamo until the middle of October, 1815. Morelos concluded his declaration by affirming that during the whole course of the revolution no arms or munitions had been received from the outside. Questioned a second time with particular reference to the weapons brought by Anaya, Morelos answered with a flat denial.²⁵ Unfortunately for the insurgents, since they did not receive the military supplies, Morelos did not have to hide the truth.

In compliance with Toledo's request, as conveyed by Bean, for the insurgent government to appoint an emissary to the United States, the Congress, on July 14, 1815, commissioned José Manuel Herrera as minister plenipotentiary, and granted him ample powers and instructions to negotiate with the United States.²⁶ He set out from the hacienda of Puruarán for the Vera Cruz area on July 16, accompanied by Bean, Francisco Antonio Peredo, Cornelio Ortiz de Zárate, and Juan Almonte, Morelos' thirteen-year-old son, who was being sent to the United States

for his education.²⁷ Herrera encountered so many difficulties on his trip to the coast that he was at the point of giving up the undertaking when there arrived at the port of Boquilla de Piedras the *Petit Milan* (*Aguila*), carrying Alvarez de Toledo, some Americans, and a cargo of military supplies. Toledo's purpose in coming to Mexico, according to the letters which he wrote on July 24 to Bean, Rosains, and Guadalupe Victoria among others, was to avoid any further delay in getting the Mexican diplomat and funds to New Orleans. Herrera agreed that if the cargo was unloaded at Boquilla de Piedras, he would pay for it on his arrival in New Orleans. Although Herrera did not suspect as yet that he was going to be trapped, he began to get very uneasy about the 29,000 pesos the Congress had given him and his companions to finance Toledo's expedition.

The voyage to New Orleans was long and rough, and Herrera was considerably relieved when he arrived safely on November 1 after a stormy month at sea. As soon as he landed, he had to surrender 23,000 pesos in payment for the cargo; and for future shipments of munitions and supplies, for which the Americans charged outrageous prices, Herrera spent the rest of his money. He then had to write the Congress for an additional 100,000 pesos to finance Toledo.²⁸

Soon after his arrival in New Orleans, Herrera was inducted into the filibustering clan and informed of projects of conquest beyond the Sabine. Those plans usually included the capture of a Mexican port to facilitate communications with New Orleans and to serve as a base for pirateering operations, which were to be coordinated with expeditions by land and supplemented with reinforcements brought by ship to Matagorda or La Bahía. One such expedition did arrive at Galveston; but when a second expedition was wrecked in attempting to land, and when additional reinforcements failed to appear, the enterprise collapsed.²⁹

Judging from Herrera's correspondence, he planned from the time he first arrived in New Orleans to undertake a trip to Washington to present his credentials and inquire about the

THE QUEST FOR FOREIGN AID

possibility of obtaining aid, but he was constantly frustrated in his efforts by various filibustering projects. Probably because he received news late in December of the capture of Morelos, he decided to abandon the idea altogether and return to Mexico. He therefore addressed the following note to James Madison, President of the United States:

On the first of November last, I reached this city with the intent of remaining here only the time absolutely necessary to make preparations for continuing my trip to Washington, and placing my credentials in the hands of Your Excellency; but I was frustrated in my intentions and hampered in my movements. I have spent four months in New Orleans, and the obstacles which delayed my departure have grown more and more numerous. This unpleasant situation has induced me to return to Mexico.³⁰

Herrera, however, remained in New Orleans a while longer, and made a pretense of keeping open the port of Galveston to assist a Mexican republic which had become almost non-existent. Within a short time José Alvarez de Toledo, who for many years was the recognized leader of the filibustering fraternity of the Louisiana frontier, announced his determination to seek the pardon "of his beloved monarch, Ferdinand VII,"³¹ and thus betrayed the insurgent cause as he had betrayed his king five years before.

The efforts of Morelos and the Mexican Congress to secure aid for the flagging revolution were courageous and determined, but futile from the beginning. The best prospect as a source of aid was the United States because of its traditional sympathy for movements of liberation, but the United States was involved in a war and could offer no help at the time. The Mexican insurgents, therefore, had to rely on adventurers and professional revolutionaries in their bid for assistance from the United States — men who were more often motivated by desire for personal fame and fortune rather than by ideological considerations. As a result, the inexperienced and unsuspecting Mexican insurgents were frequently victimized by members of the New

Orleans clan. No one questions Morelos' objectives or his patriotic efforts in seeking outside aid, but in 1814 and 1815 a greater achievement than he and his associates had effected was necessary to stem the receding revolutionary tide.

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THE QUEST FOR FOREIGN AID

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THE LAST DAYS

THE insurgent Congress, having voted to move to Tehuacán to escape the threatening Iturbide and to place itself in a better position to receive the assistance expected from the United States, set out from Uruapan on a fateful journey on September 29, 1815, the day before Morelos' fiftieth birthday. The entire insurgent government, including a half dozen members of the Congress, three judges of the Supreme Tribunal, and four secretaries, together with supplies, archives, and currency was to be escorted by Morelos and his armed forces through enemy territory by way of Tecpán and the Mixteca. At Huetamo the convoy was joined by Nicolás Bravo, and the escort was therefore increased to about a thousand men, half of whom were armed.¹

The insurgent party continued on through Cutzamala and Tlalchapa, and by November 2, it had reached Tenango, about two-thirds of the distance to Tehuacán. The convoy crossed the Mescala river, and on the next day arrived at Tesmalaca, six leagues beyond. Since the group had been on the move almost continuously for more than a month and had marched in military formation at the rate of twelve hours a day, and on scant rations, it voted to take a full day's rest at Tesmalaca.² Joyous over their good fortune thus far, and confident that it would continue, the party little suspected the impending danger which was closing in at that very moment.

Meanwhile, Calleja had received word of the insurgent exodus; and although Morelos' clever feints and false moves fooled him for a while, the viceroy was confident that at least one of the royalist detachments he had sent out from the capital would intercept the insurgents in time. His assumption was correct: Colonel Manuel de la Concha and his force of six hundred men

accidentally picked up the trail of the insurgent convoy, and by forced marches came within sight of Tescmalaca on the morning of November 5, just as the insurgents were leaving.³

The sight of the royalist force was so shocking to the insurgents that they would have fled in all directions at once had it not been for Morelos' leadership. He took immediate steps to send the deputies, the baggage, and the noncombatants ahead, while setting up his defenses in preparation for battle. Placing one division on the right and one on the left, he himself remained in the center with a division and the only two cannon the insurgents had. Colonel Concha gave the order to charge; the right wing of the insurgents gave way, broke into flight, and carried part of the center with it. A second charge of the royalists through the insurgent's broken lines caused all remaining resistance to collapse. Seeing that all was lost, Morelos cried out to Bravo, "Go save the Congress; it matters not if I perish." Ordering those about him to flee for their lives, Morelos himself spurred his horse in the direction of a steep hill. At the base he stopped to dismount, but as he was removing his spurs to facilitate the climb on foot, he was halted suddenly by a squad of royalist soldiers under Lieutenant Matías Carranco, who had served Morelos at Acapulco and Cuautla. Resistance at that point was futile. As Morelos made known his willingness to surrender, he eyed his captor and remarked laconically, "Señor Carranco, it appears that we know one another."⁴

Many other prisoners besides Morelos were taken, including José María Morales, the chaplain of the Congress, but the members of the Congress were far enough ahead at the time to escape. Under the escort of Nicolás Bravo, the Congress at length arrived at Tehuacán on November 16,⁵ but that mattered little to the royalists, who had captured the main prize. The surrender of Morelos was the greatest loss the insurgents had suffered since the capture of Miguel Hidalgo.⁶ The royalist who participated in the action of Tescmalaca were later rewarded liberally with promotions and honors.⁷

Morelos and Morales were taken to Tenango, where they were forced to witness the execution of twenty-seven prisoners who had been taken in the Tescmalaca disaster. Then the captives were shackled on muleback and escorted to Tepecuacuilco, where they were imprisoned for several days while the royalists waited for orders from Calleja. At length Concha's itinerary to the capital with his prisoners received viceregal approval, but he was instructed to complete the last four leagues of the journey, from San Agustín de las Cuevas to Mexico City, at night to prevent "an accident" from occurring.⁸

On November 16 the party left Tepecuacuilco, proceeded by way of Cuernavaca, and arrived at the capital in the early morning hours of November 22. Morelos and Morales were confined immediately to the secret prisons of the Inquisition where they could be closely guarded.

By the time the captive Morelos was led into Mexico City, he had become the subject of a heated three-cornered dispute involving the military power, the ecclesiastical authority, and the Inquisition, each of which stoutly defended its prerogatives, and insisted that the Morelos case fell exclusively within its own jurisdiction. Viceroy Calleja, representing the civil and military authority, desired an expeditious trial in which no time would be lost in convicting Morelos of treason and in sentencing him to death. But Pedro de Fonte, Archbishop-elect of Mexico and head of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, was vitally concerned with the case because of Morelos' sacerdotal status, and insisted that the ecclesiastical authority should take precedence over the civil power. Finally, the Inquisition, only recently restored in Mexico, took a lively interest in the case and viewed it as an unparalleled opportunity to recover prestige for that office. Calleja therefore recommended a compromise whereby Morelos was to be examined and tried first by a joint tribunal representing both the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the trial was to be concluded within three days.⁹

The trial began at eleven o'clock on the morning of November

22. For the remainder of the day Morelos, with his characteristic composure, answered the charges of his inquisitors. Accused of having committed the crimes of treason, of disloyalty to the king, and of promoting independence, Morelos replied that since there was no king when he joined the revolution, he worked enthusiastically for the cause of independence, assuming that there was no one against whom he could commit the crime of treason. He continued to support the independence movement, he said, because he did not expect Ferdinand VII to return to Spain. Morelos was certain that even if the king had returned, he would have become a corrupted man and a bad Catholic. Before he decided in favor of independence Morelos said that he consulted some intellectuals, who assured him that the cause was justified, since Ferdinand was guilty of surrendering Spain and himself to Napoleon. Respecting the report of Ferdinand's return to Spain in 1814, Morelos said that at first he had not believed it; after he had verified the story, he had dismissed it on the grounds that the king had returned as a "Napoleónico."

With regard to the charge that Morelos had shot royalist leaders in Oaxaca and Orizaba, and had executed persons in southern Mexico, he answered that he had ordered those executions in compliance with instructions from the Supreme Junta in the case of the first two places, and in agreement with the Congress of Chilpancingo with respect to the last. The slaughter of persons along the southern coast, he maintained, were not executions, but reprisals for the death of Matamoros. He denied that as a member of the executive power he had given orders for the burning of towns and haciendas. He had ignored the edicts of excommunication because he considered them invalid, for it was his impression, he said, that only the Pope or a general council of the Church could impose them on an independent nation. As to the specific edict of Abad y Queipo of July 22, 1814, which declared Morelos a heretic, he explained that he had ignored the edict, since he had never considered Abad a consecrated bishop. The bloodshed, the destruction of fortunes, the

separation of families, and the desolation of the country, he said, were unfortunate but inevitable results of any revolution, and in the beginning he did not anticipate so much destruction. Asked if he had celebrated mass during the revolution, Morelos answered that he had done so regularly until the bloodshed began; after that, he had not celebrated mass a single time.¹⁰

A formal defense was presented for Morelos on the next day, November 23. His attorney was José María Quiles, a youth who was still a law student in the university. Quiles believed that any attempt to deny the charges against Morelos was completely futile; but while he admitted that the defendant had committed many errors, Quiles tried to show that they were largely the result of bad judgment and misinformation. The young lawyer with considerable skill based the greater part of his defense on the decree of Ferdinand VII of May 4, 1814, which invalidated all legislation passed by the Spanish Cortes, an authority which both the king and Morelos, though for different reasons, opposed and refused to recognize. The implication was that Morelos should not be censured too severely for opposing something which the king had considered illegal. Quiles then concluded with a statement which has caused no end of controversy. According to the record, he said that if Morelos' life should be spared, he would disclose military plans that would enable the royalists to pacify the country in a short time.¹¹ What is the explanation for this statement? Was it an indiscretion on the part of a young, inexperienced lawyer? Did Morelos have anything to do with it? Or was it a royalist fabrication? Morelos, of course, was not particularly concerned about saving his life, but by that time, in anticipation of being degraded from the priesthood, he probably had become concerned about his soul. Perhaps Quiles, knowing that Morelos was willing to make concessions, hoped to save his client's life as part of the bargain, inasmuch as the young lawyer seemed to be more interested in saving Morelos' life than Morelos was.

Morelos' trial before the united jurisdictions was concluded

at noon on November 23, and the testimony was submitted to Pedro de Fonte, Archbishop-elect of Mexico, who was to pass a sentence of degradation, in accordance with arrangements already made with the viceroy, and then deliver the prisoner to the civil authority. The archbishop-elect appointed a *consultiva* composed of seven church dignitaries, including himself, which deprived the accused of all offices and benefits, and subjected him to solemn degradation, an act to be performed by his old enemy, Antonio Bergosa y Jordán, the Bishop of Oaxaca. Yet the *consultiva*, apparently apprehensive about shedding priestly blood, recommended to the viceroy that Morelos' life be spared.¹²

At that point the Inquisition, that traditional defender of orthodoxy, entered the picture. Its chief inquisitor, Manuel de Flores, welcomed the Morelos affair as an opportunity to recover some of that tribunal's shattered prestige. "No time was lost," says Henry Charles Lea, "in commencing the most expeditious trial in the annals of the Holy Office — a grim comedy to gratify the vanity of the actors."¹³ On November 23, Fiscal José Antonio Tirado, presented the *clamosa*, which charged that Morelos had signed the Constitution of Apatzingán, as well as other heretical publications; that he had celebrated mass while under a ban of excommunication; and that when the Bishop of Puebla had denounced him for doing so, he had replied that it would be easier to get a dispensation after the war than to survive the guillotine; and that he had been declared a heretic by the Bishop-elect of Michoacán.¹⁴

Later that same morning Morelos was brought before the awesome tribunal of the Inquisition, which consisted of ten distinguished churchmen. He was warned to tell the truth "for the love of God and the Virgin in order to save his soul." By the afternoon of the following day (November 24) he had been subjected to three hearings. Then the accusation consisting of twenty-six charges was presented by Fiscal Tirado. Since Morelos had forsaken the doctrines of the Church in favor of

the heresies of Hobbes, Helvetius, Voltaire, Luther, and other pestilential writers, the charges stated, the accused was declared a heretic, apostate of the holy faith, an atheist, materialist, deist, libertine, implacable enemy of Christianity and the state, a vile seducer, hypocrite, and traitor.¹⁵

For the remainder of that day and half of the next, Morelos attempted to answer the charges. The insurgents had opposed only French domination of Spain, he said, and the restoration of Ferdinand VII was, in his opinion, another aspect of Napoleonic duplicity. The ban of excommunication was based on false charges, he insisted, and consequently was invalid; since the war had interfered with the due observance of bulls and religious ceremonies, he had attempted to provide the people with spiritual care sufficient for their needs. His own life had been irregular, he admitted, but he did not think it was scandalous. Although he had sent his son to a Protestant country for his education, he had instructed him to go to a Catholic school.¹⁶

From a list of three lawyers assigned to handle Morelos' defense, he chose José María Gutiérrez de Rosas, who was allotted three hours to prepare his case. On that same afternoon (November 25) the attorney denounced the insurrection and the Cortes, expressed the hope that Morelos might be extended absolution in view of his penitent heart, and spent the rest of his time apologizing for the embarrassing position in which he had been placed. The prisoner was then led back to his cell, and the sentries were alerted to guard against any attempt by Morelos to commit suicide by taking poison.¹⁷

The *consulta de fé* met the next day to pass sentence. It unanimously agreed that a public *auto de fé* should be held at eight o'clock the next morning for the act of degradation in the presence of the inquisitors and several hundred distinguished guests selected by Flores. The *consulta* announced that Morelos was guilty of malicious, pertinacious, and imperfect confession, of heresy, of profaning the sacraments, and of high treason, human and divine. He was ordered to attend mass in the guise

of a penitent, and to present a green candle, symbolizing a heretic, to the priest. His property was to be confiscated; and should the viceroy spare his life, he was to be banished from America and imprisoned for life in an African garrison. He was to be deprived of all ecclesiastical benefits; his three children were to be declared infamous, and their descendants were to be subject to legal disabilities. He was to make a general confession, and for the rest of his life he was to recite the seven penitential psalms on Fridays, and a part of the rosary on Saturdays. A tablet, inscribed with his name and crimes, was to be suspended in the cathedral so that all posterity could view his wicked deeds.¹⁸

From that time on, Morelos, a good Catholic who was deeply concerned about salvation, began to weaken. Examined a second time by the united jurisdictions, immediately after he had heard the sentence of the Inquisition, Morelos began to divulge the military information which Quiles had promised in his defense. He mentioned fifteen insurgent commanders by name and gave details about the size and location of their armies. He said that he considered José Manuel Terán and Ramón Rayón as the two most effective officers, but added that he had much respect for others like Guadalupe Victoria, Pablo Galeana, Remigio Yarza, and Francisco Osorno. Nicolás Bravo, he thought, lacked the qualities of the others, but was a popular and courageous leader. The insurgent forces, declared Morelos, were sustained primarily by the produce of the haciendas which had belonged to captured Europeans. Although booty and contributions had brought in some revenue, import duties and the *alcabala* had produced but little. Asked about insurgent relations with the United States, Morelos admitted that vigorous efforts had been made to get help, but that nothing had been accomplished.¹⁹

The *auto de fé*, held on the morning of November 27 and witnessed by several hundred of the most distinguished persons in the capital, was an imposing and awesome spectacle.²⁰ The prisoner entered the room in penitential robes; he knelt

during the ceremony of reconciliation while the *miserere* was recited and the gentle strokes of purification were applied. After mass was celebrated, there came the terrible and agonizing act of degradation, performed by Antonio Bergosa y Jordán, who burst into tears. There were unmistakable signs of emotion on Morelos' face for the first time since the beginning of the ordeal. Bishop Bergosa wrote a full report of the proceedings to his king, and humbly requested royal approval for what he had done "so that it would serve as a guide to the bishops of Mexico, in view of the most difficult and disagreeable circumstances which have ever been encountered in this capital."²¹

Morelos then was returned to the secret prisons of the Inquisition under heavy guard and with shackles about his legs. At two o'clock in the morning he was transferred, strongly guarded, to a cell in the artillery barracks, a move which signified that his fate now rested with Viceroy Calleja and the state. The Inquisition had done its work. "It might be said," wrote Father Miguélez, "that the Mexican Inquisition, for a few moments, had been brought back to life to condemn Morelos and then had been returned to the grave to await there the verdict of History. For although it had some merits during its life, it was a pity for its good name that it could not have died with greater dignity."²²

Morelos' trial by the state began on Monday morning, November 28. The twenty-one questions which Calleja had prepared included subjects such as: why the accused had joined the revolution, his military plans and operations, his formation of the Congress of Chilpancingo, his relations with the Congress, the size of insurgent forces, relations with foreign powers, his attitude toward the restoration of Ferdinand VII, and his recommendations for the pacification of the country.²³

The testimony of Morelos in answer to the charges continued for three days, and it was recorded by Alejandro de Arana, who served as secretary. The extended account is an unbelievably complete and accurate description of Morelos' military, political,

and diplomatic activities from 1810 to 1815, and thus it constitutes one of the most valuable sources of information about the movement for independence and Morelos' role in it. While the testimony contains a number of inaccuracies and inconsistencies, one cannot fail to be amazed at the memory of the man, who was able to relate, even under those trying circumstances, an extraordinary amount of detail, including numbers of men, guns, prisoners, wounded, killed, and the like, covering a five-year period. Perhaps most of the interminable number of hours he sat in his cell were spent in reflecting on his past and in preparing notes which would aid his memory during the next day's recitation of his activities.²⁴

On the morning of December 1, Morelos again divulged vital military information as he had done before the united jurisdiction on November 26. He added that the province of Valladolid could be subdued easily with the immediate dispatch of one division, so desirous were the people there for the restoration of order and peace. Offered pardons, they would return to the royalist fold. The royalist troops at Tecpán, he advised, should advance on Zacatula and should join a division from Tlacotepec after the country around the Balsas had been subdued. The royalist force at Huajuapán, he said, should attempt to prevent Sesma and Guerrero from reconquering Oaxaca; and Terán, who was in Tehuacán, should be prevented from uniting with Guadalupe Victoria. Morelos concluded by saying that he could give no advice regarding the coast of Vera Cruz, Llanos de Apán, Nueva Galicia, or Nuevo Santander, because he was unfamiliar with the military situation in those places.

Thus, again it may be said that Morelos had weakened. But in that regard the historian Genáro García may have been close to the truth when he wrote that the object of Morelos in revealing vital information was not to save his life but to win favor with God. Those who were named, said García, did not condemn Morelos for what he had said; if they had been in his place, they would have done the same thing.²⁵ For it must be remembered

that Morelos had been born and reared as a good Catholic, educated in the doctrines of the Church, and that he had served as its obedient servant in the capacity of priest for more than twelve years. As a revolutionist, he continued to insist that he had no quarrel with the Church or its doctrines; but now as an accused man, the most awesome ecclesiastical tribunal in Christendom had labeled him a heretic and degraded him from the priesthood. Worldly and finite matters lost their significance and became secondary; his only concern now in these final days was making peace with his God.

After Morelos had been returned to his cell, a group of persons motivated by curiosity persuaded the sentries to let them view the prisoner, but when their language became vile and insulting, the viceroy ordered that no one else was to be allowed entrance. At the insistence of the archbishop, the viceroy granted sufficient time in Morelos' prison routine for the holding of spiritual exercises in his cell.²⁶

By this time the request of the state was in Calleja's hands. Dated November 28 and drafted by Auditor Miguel Bataller, it sought the death sentence and confiscation of all property. The proposed order also provided that the head of the prisoner was to be amputated and placed in an iron cage and put on exhibit in the plaza of the capital, and his right hand was to be severed and prepared for similar display in Oaxaca.²⁷

For almost three weeks, Calleja delayed. Perhaps he thought he could extract more information from his prisoner; or he might have procrastinated, hoping that the insurgent leaders, unaware of Morelos' small regard for his life, would forsake the revolution and accept a pardon in the belief that the life of the captured first chief might be spared. At any rate, the viceroy certainly had no scruples about prolonging the agony. A retraction of Morelos, supposedly written and signed on December 10 and published after his death, in which he asked for forgiveness and stated that at the time of his capture he was preparing to seek a pardon from Ferdinand VII, seems utterly incredible and is

questioned even by Alamán.²⁸ Apparently on December 12, however, Morelos disclosed additional vital information, such as the location of the principal insurgent mineral deposits, the chief mining operations, furnaces, and ammunition caches.²⁹

At length, on December 20, Calleja approved the death sentence, but in consideration of representations from the archbishop, the decree provided that execution was to take place outside the capital, and that the body should be buried without dismemberment. On the next day, as Morelos knelt in prayer, he heard the sentence which he had regarded as virtually inevitable from the moment of his capture. A confessor was then called.³⁰

At six o'clock on the following morning, December 22, a coach which carried Father Salazar and two officers, including Manuel de la Concha, stopped in front of the prisoner's cell. Still in heavy shackles, Morelos was placed aboard and escorted along the road leading to the village of Guadalupe, the site of the church of the patron saint of the Indians. Morelos began to repeat the prayers and the psalms he knew by heart. The intensity of his recitations increased as each community was approached, since he did not know where the sentence was to be carried out. The coach stopped at Guadalupe, but then continued on to San Cristóbal Ecatepec, a short distance to the north. Morelos suddenly realized that this was the final stop.

The commander of the local garrison was not prepared for his guests, so Morelos was quartered in a room full of hay while preparations for the execution were being completed. There was time for a bowl of soup. Just then, the *cura* of the town appeared, and both he and Morelos began to pray. They were interrupted by the movements of the firing squad now taking their positions just outside the window. Before prayers could be resumed, an armed escort entered the room to lead the prisoner to the place of execution.

After Morelos made a short confession to Father Salazar, the prisoner's cloak was removed; his eyes were covered with a

white handkerchief; and his arms were bound behind his body with gun slings. His shackles made walking so difficult that he was carried to an enclosure behind the building which formed a sort of parapet. The next thing Morelos heard was the voice of the commander of the escort, as he made a mark on the ground with his sword: "Put him on his knees here." Morelos asked, "Must I kneel here?" To which Father Salazar replied, "Yes, here." Morelos then knelt, and as he raised his head upward in prayer, he uttered his final words: "Lord, thou knowest if I have done well; if ill, I implore thy infinite mercy." The officer gave the command; four shots rang out; and the kneeling Morelos crumbled forward to the ground. Yet his body still moved, and another volley was necessary to take his life.³¹

The body was covered with Father Salazar's cape and was buried that afternoon in the chapel annex of the village parish church. There his remains lay until a congressional decree of July 23, 1823, ordered that they be removed, together with those of other heroes of the independence movement, to Mexico City and be deposited in urns in the Cathedral of Mexico under the Altar of the Kings. Some years later, Morelos' remains, as well as those of the other heroes, were transferred officially to a crypt at the base of the column dedicated to the leaders of independence on the Paseo de la Reforma. But there is some reason to believe that Morelos' remains were not among those which were moved — that they had already been moved by Juan Almonte to a secret grave which is still unknown.³²

The name of José María Morelos has been honored with one of the highest places in the history of his country. In 1823 he was declared *benemérito de la patria*; in 1828 the name of his birthplace, Valladolid, was changed to Morelia in his honor; and in 1862 the state of Morelos was created out of a portion of the old state of Mexico. He has been the subject of an extensive patriotic oratory and literature to praise his name and to perpetuate his memory.

If Morelos had lived to the year 1821, [wrote Porfirio Díaz in 1891] Iturbide would not have been able to take control of the national insurrection; and the nation would not have passed through a half century of shameful and bloody revolution which caused it to lose half of its territory. Today it would be the powerful republic which we would have expected from seventy years of development initiated by the courage, the abnegation, prudence, and political skill, of which that extraordinary man was the model.³³

Former President Lázaro Cárdenas, who was and still is a great admirer of Morelos, authorized the erection of a gigantic statue of the hero on the island of Janitzio in Lake Pátzcuaro. With right arm lifted majestically, it towers over the Michoacán countryside, and honors one of the greatest leaders of the Mexican revolution for independence, and one of Mexico's most outstanding men, José María Morelos — priest, soldier, statesman.

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3. Manuel de la Concha to Calleja, Tepecuacuilco, November 13, 1815, *Morelos documentos*, II, 289-90.
4. Bustamante, *Cuadro histórico*, III, 219-20.
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6. The Congress made an offer to Calleja that it would stop the bloodshed if he would be lenient and spare Morelos' life; should he refuse, the insurgents threatened to slaughter 70,000 Spaniards. See the Congress to Calleja, Tehuacán, November 17, 1815, in Peñafiel, *Ciudades y capitales*, p. 99-100.
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MORELOS OF MEXICO

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29. Testimony of Morelos, December 12, 1815, Morelos Papers, LAC UT.
30. Sentence of Calleja, December 20, 1815, *Morelos documentos*, II, 385-87.
31. Alamán, *Historia de México*, IV, 333-34. In the Latin American Collection of the University of Texas there is a Latin testament which contains the following inscription inside the cover: "This book belonged to the apostate José María Morelos Pavón, who was executed on this day on the outskirts of this town as a traitor to his country and to his king. San Cristóbal Ecatepec. December 22, 1815. Alfonso de Quiros, notary."
32. Teja Zabre, *Vida de Morelos*, p. 298.
33. Inscription of Porfirio Díaz, September 30, 1891, in a testimonial *Album* in honor of Morelos, located in the Casa de Morelos in Morelia.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

THIS BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY of José María Morelos is based to a large extent on published source materials, two of which stand out above all others. One is the three-volume collection of documents by Luis Castillo Ledón entitled *Morelos documentos inéditos y poco conocidos* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1927); the other is the six-volume collection edited by Juan E. Hernández y Dávalos called *Colección de documentos para la historia de la guerra de independencia de México de 1808 á 1821* (Mexico City, 1877-1882). These have been supplemented by printed documentary collections of a more specialized nature, manuscript materials, the writings of Morelos' contemporaries, and secondary works such as the standard multi-volume histories of Mexico in the nineteenth century, monographs, biographies, and periodical literature.

In addition to the collections of Luis Castillo Ledón and Hernández y Dávalos, a valuable single volume has been edited by Martín Luis Guzmán entitled *Morelos y la iglesia Católica* (Mexico City, 1948), in which the documents pertaining to the *capellanía* were published for the first time. Genaro García has edited a seven-volume collection called *Documentos históricos Mexicanos* (Mexico City, 1910), which contains facsimiles of insurgent newspapers; and Volume XII of his thirty-six-volume collection called *Documentos para la historia de México* (Mexico City, 1907) includes important correspondence between Morelos and Carlos Bustamante. José M. Coéllar has edited the proceedings of the trial of Matamoros in his *Proceso del Caudillo de la Independencia Don Mariano Matamoros* (Mexico City, 1918), and has published a number of facsimiles of documents relating to Morelos in *Autógrafos de Morelos* (Mexico City, 1918). Enrique Arreguín's *A Morelos — Importantes revelaciones históricas* (Morelia, 1913), a collection of documents relating to Morelos' training for the priesthood, is still useful. Pedro de Alba and Nicolás Rangel published documents on the constitutional developments of the independence period in their *Primer centenario de la Constitución de 1824* (Mexico City, 1924). The publications of the Archivo General de la Nación, the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, and the Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística have brought to light significant materials from time to time.

Most of the Morelos materials in the Archivo General de la Nación were published in either the Castillo Ledón or the Hernández y Dávalos collections, or both, but the greater part of the remaining materials were collected by the Mexican bibliographer Genaro García, whose vast library eventually became the nucleus of the Latin American Collection of the University of Texas. Included in these materials are "The José María Morelos Papers, 1795-1815," and "Documentos sacados del Archivo de Indias sobre la guerra de independencia en México." Twenty-seven of the known thirty-two letters written by the Guadalupe are in the "Morelos Papers." In the Hernández y Dávalos manuscript collection at the University of Texas (Exp. 16-7, No. 3664.733) is the *Relación histórico de lo acontecido al Lic. D. Juan Nepomuceno Rosains como insurgente*; and the Joaquín García Icazbalceta Collection has the "Informe del Exmo. Sr. Virrey D. Felix Calleja sobre el estado de la Nueva España dirigido al Ministerio de Gracia y Justicia en 18 de Agosto de 1814." In the Spanish Archives (No. 119), in the Archives of the University of Texas, is the correspondence of Luis de Onís which deals with Simón Tadeo Ortiz; also typescripts from the Archivo General de Indias of the correspondence of Alvarez de Toledo with the Mexican insurgent leaders. The staff of the Archivo General de Indias in Seville, Spain, very graciously made for the author typescripts of the five Guadalupe letters not included in the Morelos Papers, as well as the correspondence of Simón Tadeo Ortiz, including his "Relación general de mi viaje." The San Jacinto Museum of History, San Jacinto Monument, Texas, possesses miscellaneous letters of Morelos, as well as the documents covering the Guadalupe negotiations with the viceroy in 1812, entitled "Papeles cogidos al rebelde Morelos sobre el estado de opinión y proyectos formados en esta capital en fines del año de 1812." In the Archivo de Arzobispado de Valladolid in Morelia, a magnificent collection of ecclesiastical records and books, which is still largely unorganized and uncatalogued, three important documents have come to light recently, and there may well be others: one is a "Padrón general de la feligresía de Carácuaro, sus pueblos, y ranchos, y sus haciendas, y estancias por este año de 1798" by Eugenio Reyes Arroyo; the second is a request by Morelos for a chaplain for the hacienda of Cutzián, and the third is a request to transfer the capital of the parish of Carácuaro to Nocupétaro.

The most important and most productive of Morelos' contemporaries was Carlos María Bustamante, whose works are highly

informative, though strongly partisan and frequently flamboyant. The most comprehensive is his *Cuadro histórico del revolución de la America Mexicana* (5 vols. Mexico City, 1843-1846). His other works are *Campañas del General Félix María Calleja* (Mexico City, 1828), *Elogio histórico del General D. José María Morelos y Pavón* (Mexico City, 1822), and *Historia militar del General D. José María Morelos* (Mexico City, 1825), which was the first published account of Morelos' testimony before the civil authority. Other important writings of contemporaries are: *Memoir of Colonel Ellis P. Bean*, first published as Appendix 2 of Vol. I of H. Yoakum's *History of Texas* (New York, 1856); Alejandro de Humboldt's *Ensayo político sobre el reino de la Nueva España* (Edited by Vito Alessio Robles. 5 vols. Mexico City, 1914); Henry G. Ward's *Mexico in 1827* (2 vols. London, 1828); and Anastasio Zerecero's *Memorias para la historia de las revoluciones en México* (Mexico City, 1869).

Of the standard multi-volume secondary accounts which cover the independence period, the most comprehensive and broadest in scope, though conservative in tone, is Lucas Alamán's *Historia de México desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su independencia en el año 1808 hasta la época presente* (5 vols. Mexico City, 1849-1852). Very important also and generally sympathetic to Morelos and the revolution are: H. H. Bancroft, *History of Mexico* (6 vols. San Francisco, 1883-1887); Emilio del Castillo Negrete, *México en el Siglo XIX o sea su historia desde 1800 hasta la época presente* (26 vols. Mexico City, 1875-1892); José María Luis Mora, *México y sus revoluciones* (4 vols. Paris, 1856); and Vicente Riva Palacio, ed., *México á través de los siglos* (5 vols. Mexico City, 1888-1889. Vol. III, titled *La guerra de independencia* is by Julio Zárate). The multi-volume accounts by Francisco de Paula de Arrangoiz and by Niceto de Zamacois in general follow the approach of Lucas Alamán. The most comprehensive treatment of the Church is Mariano Cuevas' *Historia de la iglesia en México* (5 vols. Mexico City and El Paso, Texas, 1921-1928).

There are a number of excellent and valuable monographs dealing with phases of Morelos' career. One is Rafael Aguirre Colorado, et al., *Campañas de Morelos sobre Acapulco* (Mexico City, 1933), a scholarly work which includes in its appendices the important documents from the Archivo General de la Nación which bear on the Acapulco campaigns. A similar study is Luis Chávez Orozco's *El sitio de Cuautla* (Mexico City, 1832). Julián Bonavit,

Fragmentos de la historia del Colegio Primitivo y Nacional de San Nicolás de Hidalgo (Morelia, 1910) treats of Morelos and Hidalgo at San Nicolás. Antonio Peñafiel, *Ciudades coloniales y capitales de la República Mexicana — Estado de Morelos* (Mexico City, 1909) includes documents not available elsewhere; Albert Francisco Pradeau, *Numismatic History of Mexico* (Los Angeles, 1938) deals with Morelos' currency; Juan de la Torre, *Bosquejo histórico y estadístico de la ciudad de Morelia* (Mexico City, 1883) has insights on Morelos' birthplace; J. M. Miguel y Vergés, *La independencia Mexicana y la prensa insurgente* (Mexico City, 1941) covers the role of the insurgent press; and Harris Gaylord Warren, *The Sword Was Their Passport* (Baton Rouge, 1943) is a scholarly treatment of filibustering activities on the frontier of northern Mexico.

The best biographical work on Morelos in any language has been done by Alfonso Teja Zabre, whose first study appeared in 1934, followed by a second in 1946 and a third in 1959. Since each biography is a revision of the older work, and includes the results of the most recent research which Teja Zabre has completed on his subject, each new study is an improvement on the previous one. The biography by Ruben Hermesdorf, called *Morelos — Hombre fundamental de México* (Mexico City, 1958) and the one by Ezequiel Chávez, called *Morelos* (No. 39 in the series entitled *Figuras y episodios de la historia de México*, Mexico City, 1958), are better than the others, such as the one by Victor Esperón or Francisco Urquiza, which are too eulogistic. Four useful biographical sketches are: James Magner, *Men of Mexico* (Milwaukee, 1942); John A. Caruso, *The Liberators of Mexico* (New York, 1954); Nicolás Rangel, *José María Morelos — Caudillo de la independencia* (Mexico City, 1915); and an article by Genaro García in the *Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia, y Etnografía*, Ser. 4, I (March-April, 1922), 193-198. The most thorough and up-to-date account of Miguel Hidalgo since José de la Fuente's *Hidalgo íntimo* (Mexico City, 1910) is Luis Castillo Ledón's *Hidalgo: La vida del héroe* (2 vols. Mexico City, 1948-1949). For the other revolutionary figures, one should consult Eduardo L. Gallo, ed., *Hombres ilustres Mexicanos* (4 vols. Mexico City, 1873-1874) and Alejandro Villaseñor y Villaseñor, *Biografías de los héroes y caudillos de la independencia* (Mexico City, 1910). Of the voluminous amount of periodical literature, the following articles are of the greatest significance: Alberto María Carreño, "Los primeros pasos hacia la democracia y la inde-

pendencia Mexicanas, 1810-1813," *Memorias de la Academia Mexicana de la Historia*, III (January-March, 1944), 41-91; Isidro Fabela, "Los precursores de la diplomacia Mexicana," *Archivo Histórico Diplomático Mexicano*, XX (1926), 1-206; José M. de la Fuente, "Un autógrafo de Hidalgo," *Boletín de la Sociedad de Geografía y Estadística*, III (1908), 419-423; Hugh M. Hamill, Jr., "Early Psychological Warfare in the Hidalgo Revolt," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, XLI (May, 1961), 201-235; Germán Latorre, "La separación del virreinato de Nueva España de la metrópoli," *Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas, Museos*, XXXI (September-December, 1914), 120-221; Henry Charles Lea, "Hidalgo and Morelos," *American Historical Review*, IV (1898-1899), 636-651; Manuel Puga y Acal, "La fase diplomática de nuestra guerra de independencia," *Revista Mexicana de Derecho Internacional*, I (September, 1919), 410-492; and Karl M. Schmitt, "The Clergy and the Independence of New Spain," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, XXXIV (August, 1954), 289-312. The most illuminating of several articles which Alfonso Teja Zabre has written is "Posteridad y presencia de Morelos," *Memoria de la Academia Nacional de Historia y Geografía*, Bol. 1, Año Tercer, Segunda Epoca (1947), 47-58, the greater part of which he later included in his most recent biography, *Vida de Morelos* (Mexico City, 1959).

INDEX

- Abad y Queipo, Manuel Bishop-elect, ordered ban of excommunication, 40; granted dispensation to insurgents, 54; Morelos' letter to, 127; declared Morelos a heretic, 157
- Acambaro, 39
- Acapulco, commercial importance in colonial period, 3-4; Hidalgo's order to Morelos to capture, 41; description of, 44, 81; first insurgent effort to capture, 45-46; siege of, 80-82; insurgent capture of and significance, 82-83, 108; Morelos ordered to, 130; under insurgent control, 131; insurgent loss of, 131; mentioned, 1, 50, 67, 127, 140, 145, 155
- Aculco, site of royalist victory, 58
- Acuyo, town in parish of Carácuaro, 20, 21
- Aguacatillo, occupied by Morelos' army, 44; royalists attempt to dislodge insurgents from, 45; new government proclaimed at, 51
- Agua Dulce, Morelos at, 134
- Águila, schooner belonging to Amigoni, 148; mentioned, 150
- Aguirre Colorado, quoted, 80
- Ajuchitlán, Morelos retreats to, 129
- Alamán, Lucas, Mexican historian, 3, 64, 97, 101, 109, 119, 165
- Alcabala, sales tax, 50; retained by insurgents, 103; to be abolished, 117; mentioned, 161
- Alcalá, José María, canon of the metropolitan church, 93
- Alcalde de Carácuaro, complaint of, 21
- Alcaldes mayores, officials of New Spain, 19
- Alcocer, Miguel Gurudi y, see Gurudi y Alcocer, Miguel
- Aldama, Ignacio, ordered to Texas, 140
- Aldama, Juan, lawyer and captain in San Miguel regiment, 36; carried news, 38
- Alderete y Soria, Manuel de, signed Constitution of 1814, 135
- Allende, Ignacio, associate of Hidalgo, 36, 37; received news of conspirator's arrest, 38; urged Hidalgo to march to capital, 57; breach with Hidalgo who surrendered authority to Allende, 59
- Almonte, Brígida, Indian mother of Morelos' first child, 27
- Almonte, Juan Nepomuceno, son of Morelos and Brígida Almonte, 27; sent to United States for his education, 149-150; possibly moved Morelos' remains, 166
- Alvarez de Toledo, José, revolutionary activities, 142-143; failure in Texas, 144; relations with Mexican Congress, 148-150; betrayal of insurgent cause, 151
- Alvarez, Melchor, commanded royalist force, 132
- Alzate, José María, Latin instructor of José Morelos, 7
- American Septentrional, mentioned, 123
- Americans, Morelos' use of term, 51-52; mentioned, 50, 55, 70, 78, 89, 94, 97, 101
- Amigoni, Julius Caesar, sea captain, 148
- Anaya, Juan Pablo, supported Rosains, 147, 148; left for Mexico, 149
- Anglo-Americans, mentioned by Morelos, 55
- Antón Lizardo, near island of Sacrificios, 141
- Anzures, Captain, brought up rear guard at Cuautla, 72
- Apatzingán, mentioned, 3; Morelos' name submitted here, 10-11; Constitution of, 135
- Arana, Alejandro de, recorded charges against Morelos, 162
- Arancel, ecclesiastical fee, 21, 23
- Aretusa, British frigate, 141
- Argandar, Francisco, signed Constitution of 1814, 135
- Armijo, José Gabriel de, army commander, 108; led royalist army, 129, 130; approached Acapulco, 131
- Arriero, muleteer, early occupation of José Morelos, 3, 4, 7
- Arroyave, Francisco, provisional commander, 132
- "A Short Plea which the Servant of the Nation Makes to his Fellow-Citizens," speech by Morelos, 122
- Atijo, ranch of, 24, 131; site of Cos' imprisonment, 137
- Atizapán, 87
- Atotonilco, symbol of revolution hoisted here, 39
- Atoyac, insurgents of, 54
- Audiencia, high court, 26, 32, 33
- Auto de fé, Morelos sentenced by, 160, 161
- Ayuntamiento, municipal council of Mexico City, 32; established at Oaxaca, 79. See also cabildo.

INDEX

- Bancroft, H. H., historian, 16, 39; comments on battle at bridge of Calderón, 59
- Baqueró, Nicolás, Morelos' attorney, 8
- Bataller, Miguel, drafted request of state, 164
- Bayonne, France, site of Napoleon's machinations, 31
- Bean, Peter Ellis, famous Anglo-American adventurer, 45; set up powder mill for Morelos, 48-49; efforts to obtain aid for insurgents, 146-150
- Benemérito de la patria*, honor bestowed upon Morelos, 166
- Bergosa y Jordán, Antonio, Bishop of Oaxaca, 53; nominated Archbishop of Mexico, enemy of Morelos, 77; fled from Oaxaca, 78; worked to influence parish priests, 92; mentioned, 105; performed degradation of Morelos, 159, 161
- Bishop of Michoacán, Antonio de San Miguel, 18; recommendations of, 20, letter to, 21
- Bolívar, Simón, correspondence to, 146
- Bonaparte, Joseph, proclaimed King of Spain, 31
- Bonaparte, Napoleon, invades Spain, 31; mentioned, 52, 70, 133, 157, 160
- Bourbons, restoration of, 133
- Bravo family, served insurgent cause, 47, 77, 81
- Bravo, Leonardo, commander under Morelos, 66; execution of, 73
- Bravo, Miguel, at Chiautla, 64
- Bravo, Nicolás, tells story about Morelos, 4; activities with the insurgents, 126, 127, 134, 154, 155, 161
- Bravo, Victor, part in battle at Oaxaca, 77
- British, see Great Britain
- Buenos Aires, 113
- Bustamante, Carlos María, Mexican historian, 1, 34, 40, 64, 72, 75; connection with Los Guadalupe, 86; later editor of *Correo Americano del Sur*, 88, 107, 108; contributed to *Juguettillo*, 88; termed Calleja "the New Tamerlane," 91; received statement from Morelos, 105; proposed insurgent congress, 113; *suplente* for Mexico, 116; prepares address for Morelos, 117; mentioned, 121; drafts Declaration of Independence, 122; text of Declaration of Independence, 123; mentioned, 126, 127, 128; retires to Oaxaca, 129; mentioned, 130; and Constitution of 1814, 135
- Cabildo*, council, 88, 89, 92, 93
- Cádiz, 121, 142
- Cádiz regency, 34-35, 77, 86
- Calderón, bridge of, battle, 58
- Calleja, Félix María, royalist leader and chief adversary of Morelos, 58, 59, 61, 63, 64, 65, 66; siege of Cuautla, 69-73, 74; mentioned, 74, 83; Viceroy of New Spain, 86, 90, 91; mentioned, 92, 93, 94, 97; his defense of the capital of Michoacán, 127-128; mentioned, 132; efforts to strengthen royalist cause, 133, 134; reaction to Constitution of 1814, 136; action against insurgents, 154-155; part in trial of Morelos, 156, 162-165
- Callejistas*, a faction in Mexico City, 91
- Camargo, Luis, attorney for Rodríguez Carnero, 8
- Campillo, Manuel Ignacio, Bishop of Puebla, denunciation of Morelos, 54; mentioned, 159
- Capellán*(es), chaplain, 6, 8, 12
- Capellanía de misas*, an endowment for the saying of mass, here refers to a benefice from Morelos maternal great-grandfather, 4-6; mentioned, 28
- Caracas, 113, 145
- Carácuaro, Morelos appointed *cura* and *juez eclesiástico* of, 14; parish of, 20, 24; mentioned, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29; Morelos' personal affairs at, 27; parish of, during 1810, 34; mentioned, 41, 42, 44, 126, 131
- Cárdenas, Lázaro, former president of Mexico, 167
- Carnero, José Joaquín, see Rodríguez Carnero, José Joaquín
- Carnero, José Romualdo, see Rodríguez Carnero, José Romualdo
- Caro, Mariana de, wife of José Antonio Martínez Conejo, 6
- Carranco, Lieutenant Matías, captures Morelos, 155
- Cartagena, 144, 145
- "Casa de Morelos," national museum, 27
- Cascolote*, dye produced from thick bark of a tree, 23
- Castillo Negrete, quoted, 99
- Catholic Church, see Roman Catholic Church
- Celaya, 2, 6, 39
- Cervantes, Miguel, husband of Morelos' sister, 27; letter from Morelos to, 29; mentioned, 41
- Chaqueta*(s), faction of creoles in Mexico City sympathetic to Spaniards, 95, 108

INDEX

- Charles IV, King of Spain, 31
 Charo, 39, 40
 Chiautla, taken by insurgents, 63; division of forces at, 64; mentioned, 67, 73, 105
 Chichihualco, site of royalist defeat, 46; location of Bravo family at outset of revolt, 47; Rayón's arrival here, 122
 Chico, José María, Guanajuato lawyer, 58
 Chihuahua, site of Hidalgo's trial, 59
 Chilapa, Morelos' forces enter, 46; mentioned, 49, 51, 74
 Chilpancingo, royalists in, 47; sulphur mine near, 48; mentioned, 50, 67, 83, 108, 111, 113, 114, 115, 116, 118, 121-123, 126, 127, 129; see also Congress of
 China Road, overland route from Aca-pulco to Mexico City, 4
 Chupio, 126
 Churumuco, district of, 13; Reyes Arroyo assigned to, 14; mentioned, 20, 24, 44
Clamosa, inquisitional charge against Morelos, 159
 Clement X, 105
 Clergy, role of the, 53-54; see also *cura*
 Coahuayutla, 44
 Coahuila, 135
 Coffin, Holmes, British captain, 141
 Colima, 7, 36, 82
 College of San Idelfonso, 60
 Concha, Manuel de la, officer whose force captured Morelos, 154-156; mentioned, 165
 Conejo, José Antonio, see Martínez Conejo, José Antonio
 Conejo, José Ignacio, see Martínez Conejo, José Ignacio
 Congress of Anáhuac, see Congress of Chilpancingo
 Congress of Chilpancingo, 101-103, 112-123; protection of, 126; activities of, 129-132, 134-135, 137-138, 148-151, 154, 155, 157, 162
 Constitution of Apatzingán, see Constitution of 1814
 Constitution of 1812, mentioned, 87; provisions for *cabildo* members, 88; elector feature suspended, 89; terms of, 97; declared void, 133; influence on Constitution of 1814, 135
 Constitution of 1814, proclaimed October 22, 1814, 135; provisions of, 136; Morelos signed, 159
 Constitution of the United States, influence on Constitution of 1814, 136
Consulta de fé, passed sentence on Morelos, 160
Consultiva, advisory body of seven Church dignitaries, recommended Morelos' life be spared, 159
 Córdoba, 80, 81
Corregidor of Querétaro, 36, 38; see Domínguez, Miguel
Correo Americano del Sur, newspaper founded by Morelos, 87-88, 107-108
 Cortázar, Manuel, lawyer, 93
 Cortes, see Spanish Cortes
 Cortez, Hernando, 16
 Cos, José María, insurgent editor, 87, 107; *suplente* for Vera Cruz, 116; fled to Tlacotepec, 129; commanding general, 130; further insurgent activities, 132-133, 135-136; revolt against Congress, 137
 Council of Trent, 9, 12
 Count of Sierragorda, see Escandón y Llera, Mariano, 40
 Coyuca, 44, 47, 129, 131
 Crespo, 129
 Cristo y Conde, Licenciado, *suplente*, 92
 Cruz Grande, 81
 Cuautla de las Amilpas, 50; fell to insurgents, 64; mentioned, 65, 66; Calleja prepares to attack, 67; description of, 69; attack at, 69-73; significance of battle, 74; mentioned, 91, 155
 Cuba, 144
 Cuernavaca, 4, 48, 65, 89, 156
Cura, Morelos appointed *cura* of Carácuaro, 14; unsung heroes, 17-18, 19; of Carácuaro, 23, 24; mentioned, 25; life of, 29; of Dolores, 36; *cura* Hidalgo, 38; of Jantetelco, 48; of Tuzantla, 62; of Huamuxtitlán, 105; mentioned, 113, 116, 131; of Uruapan, 137; mentioned, 165
Cura Interino, Morelos assigned as, 13
 Cutzamala, 26, 126, 154
 Cutzián, hacienda of, 23, 24, 25
 Declaration of Independence (Mexican), text of, 123; mentioned, 126
 Decree of Ferdinand VII, 158
Decurión, monitor in school having the care of ten pupils, 8
 Díaz, Manuel, 86
 Díaz, Porfirio, 167
Diezmos, a tithe, retained by insurgents, 103, 116
 Dolores, town at which Hidalgo raised standard of revolt, 29; mentioned, 35-36, 38
 Domínguez, Miguel, 36, 38

INDEX

- Donativo*, donation or gift, forced contribution on a product, 104
Duke of Wellington, commanded Anglo-Spanish armies, 133
Durango, 135
- East Texas, 141
El Despertador Americano, insurgent paper, 58; founded by Miguel Hidalgo, 107
Elizondo, Ignacio, betrayed insurgents, 59
El Veladero, 44, 45, 46, 49, 50
El Zanjón, 44
Ensayo político sobre el reino de la Nueva España, written by Alexander von Humboldt, 18
Escandón y Llera, Mariano, Count of Sierragorda, governor of the mitre in Valladolid, 40, 41
Españoles, 1, 2, 3
Esquiros, Tiburcio, legal rival of José Morelos for benefice, 8
Europe, 113, 123, 143
Europeans, 40, 50, 55, 70, 89, 91, 92, 101, 103, 106, 117; see also *gachupines*
- Fagoaga, José María, 92
Faro, David, 49-50, 140
Ferdinand (VII), son of Charles IV, 31; mentioned, 33, 37, 39, 52, 57, 61, 62, 63, 97, 98, 122, 133, 151, 157, 158, 160, 162, 164
Fernández, Manuel Félix, see Victoria, Guadalupe, pseudonym
Fernández de Lizardi, José Joaquín, connected with Los Guadalupe, 86, as writer of pamphlets, 88, jailed, 88
Flores, José Victoriano, possible fourth child of José Morelos, 28
Flores, Manuel de, chief inquisitor, 159, 160
Fonte, Pedro de, Archbishop-elect of Mexico, 156, 159
France, 51, 52, 55, 59; defeat of French forces, 133; Constitution of 1791 and 1795, 136; mentioned, 142, 160
French Revolution, influence on Spanish 1812 Constitution, 87
Fuente, José de la, scholar on Hidalgo, 37-38
- Gachupines*, European-born Spaniards who settled in Latin America, 32; plan to seize, 38; death to, 39, 70; enemies to mankind, 51; mentioned, 52, 91, 92, 95
Gago, Pepe, royalist artillery officer, 45
- Galeana, Hermenegildo, able officer of Morelos, 47, 48; leader in attacking Taxco, 64; mentioned, 66; led retreat from Cuautla, 72; mentioned, 75, 77, 81, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131; death of, 131
Galeana, Pablo, 161
Galeana, Pedro, nephew of Hermenegildo Galeana, 81
Galen, grandfather of Hermenegildo Galeana, 47
Galván, María Ramona, mother of José Victoriano Flores, possible fourth child of José Morelos, 28
Galveston, 150, 151
García, Genaro, historian, 163
García Obesa, street in Morelia, birthplace of José Morelos, 1-2
Garibay, Pedro de, Viceroy of New Spain, 32, 33; mentioned, 35
Generalissimo, title of Hidalgo, 39; executive authority of, 115; mentioned, 118; Morelos as, 126, 130; mentioned, 121, 145
Gobernador of Carácuaro, 21
Godoy, Manuel, Spanish prime minister, 31
Great Britain, negotiations with Mexican insurgents, 140-142; mentioned, 147; at war with United States, 148, 149
Grito de Dolores, insurgent battle cry, 34, 38, 39, 60, 85
Guadalajara, 58, 59, 60, 116, 121, 142
Guadalupe, Morelos, use of the Indian patron saint, 106
Guadalupe, site of church of patron saint, 165
Guadalupe, secret partisans of independence, 80, 85; viceregal authorities concerned about, 86; established contact with Morelos, 86; established insurgent publications, 87; hopes of electing members to *cabildo*, 88-93; mentioned, 107; sent congratulations to Morelos, 121; correspondence captured, 130; mentioned, 132; contacted by Tadeo Ortiz, 143; insisted that help was imminent, 146
Guadalupe Society, see Guadalupe
Guadalupe, royalist brigantine, 81
Guanajuato, birthplace of Miguel Cervantes, 27; in rebellion, 33; mentioned, 36, 58, 66, 98, 116, 121, 130, 135
Guatemala, 82
"Guaxaca," obviously refers to Oaxaca, from a document, 145
Guedea, Don Rafael, 39
Guerrero (state of), 81, 82, 163

INDEX

- Guerrero, Vicente, insurgent leader who served Morelos, later became constitutional president of Mexico, 47-48
- Gurudi y Alcocer, Miguel, ex-deputy to the Cortes, 92
- Gutiérrez de Robles, Francisco, *cura* who baptized infant Morelos, 1
- Gutiérrez de Rosas, José Maria, defended Morelos, 160
- Haiti, 144
- Havana, 92
- Herrera, José Manuel de, editor of *Co-reo Americano del Sur*, 88, 107; former *cura* of Huamuxtitlán, 105; deputy for Tecpán, 116; fled to Tlaxcotepec, 129; signed Constitution of 1814, 135; commissioned minister plenipotentiary, 149; mission to the United States, 149-151
- Herrera, Nicolás Santiago, see Santiago
- Herrera, Nicolás, *cura* of Uruapan
- Hidalgo, José Joaquín, *cura* of Dolores and older brother of Miguel Hidalgo, 36
- Hidalgo, Miguel, at San Nicolás, 7; revolt mentioned, 29; early life and career, 35-36; revolutionary plans and activities, 36-39; in Valladolid, 40; Morelos' interview with, 40-41; influence on Morelos, 42, 52; mentioned, 44, 46, 49; battle of Monte de las Cruces, 57; revolutionary government, 58; battle at Bridge of Calderón, 58-59; capture, trial, and execution, 59-60; mentioned, 80, 82, 97, 106, 107, 113, 122, 131, 140, 141, 143, 155
- Holy Office, see Inquisition
- Hotel Antonio de Mendoza, in Morelia, 128
- Huajuapán, 74, 132, 163
- Huamuxtitlán, 105
- Huetamo, 126, 149, 154
- Humana, Patricio, 102; drafted Humana text of *Medidas políticas*, 103; footnote 16, page 109
- Humbert, Joseph Amable, pirate, 147, 148
- Ibáñez de Corvera, Antonio, 105
- Idiáquez, José María, printer, 107
- Ilustrador Americano*, insurgent newspaper, 87, 107
- Imprenta de la Nación, insurgent press, 87
- Indaparapeo, 39, 40
- Indian(s), 3; condition of 18-20; supported revolt, 33; undisciplined Indian horde, 52; restoration of lands to, 58; mentioned, 100, 106, 165
- Informe* of Antonio de San Miguel, 18; of Viceroy Calleja, 93
- Inquisition, charged Hidalgo with teaching heretical doctrines, 36; re-established, 133; mentioned, 156; charged Morelos, 159; sentenced Morelos, 161-162
- Intendancy of Guanajuato, 33, 35
- Isle of León, 34, 86
- Iturbide, Agustín de, royalist commander, 47; mentioned, 60; received orders from Calleja, 127; leads troops, 128; mentioned, 154, 167
- Iturrigaray, José de, Viceroy of New Spain, 32
- Ixpexi, location of gold mines, 105
- Izúcar, 48, 64, 66, 67, 72, 73, 77
- Jackson, General Andrew, 147
- Jamaica, 144
- Janitzio, island in Lake Pátzcuaro, 167
- Juez de capellanías*, 25
- Juez de testamentos y capellanías*, justice before whom Morelos presented his case, 8
- Juez eclesiástico*, ecclesiastic judge of Celaya, 6; Morelos appointed, 14
- Jugueteillo*, periodical, 88
- Junta de censura*, 87, 88
- Junta of Protection and Public Confidence, created in Oaxaca for order and security, 79
- Junta of Seville, 32, 33, 86
- Junta of Zitácuaro, see Supreme National Junta
- La Bahía, 150
- Labrador*, first employment of José Morelos, 3, 4
- La Corregidora, street, birthplace of José Morelos, 1-2
- Lady of Guadalupe, see Virgin of Guadalupe
- Lake Pátzcuaro, 167
- Landazuri, Doming, commanded Valladolid garrison, 127
- La Sabana, 44, 45, 46
- Las Animas, 108
- Las Cruces, 44
- Las Iguanas, 46
- Lea, Charles Henry, quoted, 159
- León, hacienda of Manuel Díaz, 86
- Letona, Pascasio, see Ortiz de Letona, Pascasio

INDEX

- Liceaga, José María, second-in-command to Ignacio López Rayón, 61; member of Supreme National Junta, 62, 90, 97; attitude concerning destruction of Zitácuaro, 64-65; active in Guanajuato, 98; *propietario* for Guanajuato, 116; fled to Tlacotepec, 129; signed Constitution of 1814, 135; executive, 136
- Limpio de sangre*, pure blood, 3
- Lizana y Beaumont, Francisco Xavier, Archbishop of Mexico becomes Viceroy of New Spain; removal of, 35; succeeded by Antonio Bergosa y Jordán, 77
- Lizardi, José Joaquín, see Fernández de Lizardi
- Llano, Ciriaco de, reinforced Calleja, 70; against insurgents at Cuautla, 72; received orders from Calleja, 127; pursues insurgents, 128
- Llano Largo, 44
- Llanos de Apán, 163
- Lobo, Juan Bautista, represented Viceroy, 90
- London, 113
- López Rayón, Ignacio (known generally as Rayón) see Rayón, Ignacio
- "Los Guadalupe," see Guadalupe
- Louisiana, 141, 148, 151
- Lugar-teniente*, Morelos commissioned as, 41, 44
- Madison, James (President of United States), note from José Manuel de Herrera, 151
- Magistral*, pertaining to a grand master of a military order, referring in this case to José de Alcalá, 93
- Manila galleons, 4
- Marqués, 44
- Martínez, Juan, drafted abbreviated copy of *Medidas políticas*, 102; see footnote 16, page 109
- Martínez Conejo, José Antonio, received benefice, 6; marriage of, 8
- Martínez Conejo, José Ignacio, son of former *capellán*, rival claimant, 12
- Martínez, Juan José, sold house to Morelos, 27
- Matagorda, 150
- "Mata Morelos," special cannon named by Mateo Muzitu, 63
- Matamoros, Mariano, alleged involvement in Hidalgo conspiracy, 37; joins Morelos, 48; mentioned, 66; named second-in-command, 77; gave Morelos new uniform, 79; ordered to complete conquest of southern coastal region, 81; provincial commander, 121; ordered to Chilpancingo, 126; placed in command at Valladolid, 127; capture, trial, and death, 128; mentioned, 130; reprisals for death of, 157
- Medidas políticas* . . . , document probably written by Morelos, 101; text of, 101-102
- Méndez, José María, 41
- Méndez, Miguel, attorney who awarded Morelos the inheritance, 28
- Mescal River, 129, 154
- Metates*, curved stone for grinding maize, 48
- Mexican independence, in Plan de Iguala, 47; greater emphasis on, 57; Hidalgo's declaration on, 59; Morelos' recommendation for, 115; declared, 122-123; mentioned, 126; Morelos reasons for supporting, 157
- Mexico City, 1, 3, 4, 33, 39, 57, 60, 61, 63, 73, 77, 78; events in, 85-95; mentioned, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 94, 121, 132, 142, 143, 156, 166, 167
- Mexico (nation), British minister to, 71; independence of, 123; mentioned, 137, 140, 144, 145, 148, 156, 159, 167
- Mexico (province), 82, 116, 121, 166
- Mexico-Tenochtitlán, 118
- Micheltorena, José de, paymaster of the army, 103
- Michoacán (province), birthplace of Morelos, 1; mentioned, 7, 10, 11, 12, 17, 60, 40, 54, 82, 116, 121, 127, 130, 135, 167
- Mier y Terán, Manuel, joins insurgent forces, 79
- Miguélez, Father, quoted, 162
- Miserere*, prayer for mercy, recited, 162
- Mixteca, 77, 154
- Moctezuma, Antonio José, signed Constitution of 1814, 135
- Molina de Estrada, Juana María, mother of Doña Juana María Pérez Pavón, 2; marriage to José Antonio Pérez Pavón, 8
- Monclova, 59
- Monte de las Cruces, battle at, 57
- Montes de Oca, Isidoro, 81, 131
- Mora, José María Luis, historian, 65
- Morales, José María, chaplain of the Congress, 132; captured, 149, 155; taken to Mexico City, 156
- Morelia, see Valladolid
- Morelos (state of), 166
- Morelos, Felipe, uncle of José Morelos, 3
- Morelos, Francisco Pérez, see Pérez Morelos, Francisco

INDEX

- Morelos, Guillermo, father of Manuel Morelos, 2
- Morelos, José María Teclo, early background, 1-4, 7-9; legal battle for benefice, 8-9, 11-12, 28-29; Church career, 7-26; mother's influence on, 13; personal life, 27-28; early revolutionary activities, 29, 37, 40-50; program of reform, 51-53; activities in the south, 44-55; second campaign, 63-69; siege of Cuautla, 69-73; escape of, 73; siege of Acapulco, 80-83; insurgent publications, 87-89; reform program, 97-110; Servant of the Nation, see Chapter IX, 111-125; characteristics of, 111-112; activities with Congress, 115-123; Morelos in decline, see Chapter X, 126-139; negotiations for foreign aid, see Chapter XI, 140-152; last days, 154-168
- Morelos, Manuel, father of José María, 1, 2, 10
- Morelos, María Antonia, sister of José María Teclo Morelos, 2; marriage to Miguel Cervantes, 27
- Morelos, Nicolás, brother of José María Teclo Morelos, 2, 27
- Morelos Sur, site of the "Casa de Morelos," 27
- Moreno, Jacinto Mariano, grammar instructor of José Morelos, 7; gives glowing account of student Morelos, 8; interceded in behalf of prisoners, 78
- Morillo, General Pablo, pursued Bolívar's forces, 146
- Muñiz, Manuel, commander-in-chief of provinces, 121; quarrel with José Cos, 132
- Murguía y Galardi, José María, intendant of Oaxaca province, 79; elected to junta, 100; appointed to administer finances of insurgents, 103; *propietario* for Oaxaca, 116
- Murphi, Tomás, agent for merchants, 90
- Muzito, Mateo, execution of, 63
- Nacogdoches, 142
- Napoleon, see Bonaparte, Napoleon
- National Junta, see Supreme National Junta
- Nautla, town on coast north of Vera Cruz, 147, 148
- Negroes, plot to incite Negroes against whites, 49
- New Granada, 144, 145, 146
- New Orleans, 142, 147, 148, 150, 151-152
- New Spain, 4, 9, 16, 17, 18, 32, 33, 35, 44, 52, 54, 86, 91, 93, 133, 141
- Niño, Agustín, insurgent captain, 141
- Nocupétaro, 20, 21, 24, 26-28
- Nolan, Philip, ill-fated expedition of, 48; mentioned, 49, 140
- Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, see Virgin of Guadalupe
- Nueva Galicia, 66, 163
- Nuevo León, 130, 135
- Nuevo Santander, 163
- Oaxaca, 28, 50, 53, 66, 74, 77; insurgent capture of, 78-79; Morelos' reforms at, 79-80; mentioned, 87, 89, 92, 98, 99, 100, 102, 103, 104, 106, 107, 116, 118, 121, 129; recapture by royalists, 132; mentioned, 146, 157, 163, 164
- Obesa, see García Obesa, street in Valladolid, 1
- Obeso, José María, captain of the Valladolid militia, 33
- Ochoa, Francisco Xavier de, left money for spiritual purposes, 24
- Ometepec, 64, 67, 81
- Onís, Luis de, Spanish ambassador to United States, 142; mentioned, 143
- Orizaba, 75, 77, 80, 98, 157
- Ortiz de Ayala, Simón Tadeo, insurgent diplomat, 142-146
- Ortiz de Letona, Pascasio, (sometimes known as Pascasio Letona), envoy plenipotentiary to the United States, 58, 140
- Ortiz de Zárate, Cornelio, 135, 149
- Ortiz, Francisca, mother of José Morelos, third child, 28
- Ortiz, María Josefa, wife of Miguel Domínguez, 36
- Osorno, Francisco, 161
- Ozumba, 75
- Pacific coast, conquest of, 44, 82
- Padrón general*, census of Carácuaro parish, 20
- Panama, 145
- Parota, ranch of, 24
- Pátzcuaro, 13, 33, 128
- Pavón, José Antonio, see Pérez Pavón, José Antonio
- Pavón, Juana, see Pérez Pavón, Juana
- Pedroza, José Antonio, supported Rayón, 147, 148
- Pénjamo, 35
- Pensacola, 149
- Peredo, Francisco Antonio, 149
- Pérez, Morelos, Licenciado Francisco, grand-nephew of José Morelos, 1

INDEX

- Pérez Pavón, Francisco, nephew of Pedro Pérez Pavón, 6
- Pérez Pavón, José Antonio, father of Doña Juana María Pérez Pavón, 2; named in father's will, 6; part in legal dispute, 8-9
- Pérez Pavón, Juana María, maiden name of José Morelos' mother, 1; her ancestors, 2; mentioned, 10; fight for son's inheritance, 8-9, 11-12; death of, 13; Morelos inherited properties from, 27
- Pérez Pavón, María, sister of Pedro Pérez Pavón, 6; part in legal battle, 9
- Pérez Pavón, Pedro, maternal great grandfather of José Morelos, 4, 6
- Pérez Pavón, Sebastián, nephew of Pedro Pérez Pavón, 6
- Petatlán, 44, 131
- Petit Milan, see also *Aguila*, ship, 150
- Philadelphia, 142
- Philosophes*, 36
- Pie de la Cuesta, Armijo retires to, 131
- Pike, Zebulon, 149
- Pimentel, Francisco de, minister of the treasury, 103, 104
- Plan de Iguala, called for independence of Mexico, 47
- Ponce de León, José María, signed Constitution of 1814, 135
- Popayán, 145
- Porlier, Rosendo, royalist commander, 64, 65
- Port au Prince, 144
- Portugal, French conquest of, 31
- Prendimiento, 1
- Promotor Fiscal*, request of Morelos submitted to, 25
- Propietarios*, representatives chosen by electors, 115, 116
- Puebla, 50, 63, 64-67, 74, 75, 80, 82, 116, 121, 130, 132
- Puente del Rey, 146
- Puruarán, hacienda of, 128, 129, 148, 149
- Querétaro, 33; center of revolt, 36-37; occupied by royalists, 58; occupied by insurgents, 66; represented by Manuel de Alderete y Soria, 135
- Quetzala, 81
- Quiles, José María, attorney for Morelos, 158; mentioned, 161
- Quintana Roo, Andrés, connected with Los Guadalupe, 86; writer, 86; founded *Semanario Patriótico Americano*, 107; *suplente* for Puebla, 116; mentioned, 119; welcomes Rayón, 122; fled to Tlacotepec, 129; influenced Constitution of 1814, 135
- Quiroga, Vasco de, founder of San Nicolás College, 7
- Quito, 145
- Quoniam in Exercitiis*, an official document of the Church granting certain privileges to chaplains, 105
- Ramírez, Pedro, imprisoned, 132
- Rancho de la Virgen, site of Trujano headquarters, 74
- Rayón, Ignacio, see also López Rayón, Ignacio, 49, 51, 57, 58; biographical sketch, 60-61; President of the Supreme Junta, 62; loss of power, 65; mentioned, 72, 75, 79, 87; his consideration of Guadalupe plan, 90; part in Morelos' reform program, 97-100, 103, 106, 107; note of warning to Morelos, 111-112; suggestion to, 113; opposes Morelos' measures, 114; *propietario*, 116; absent from Congress, 121; welcomed to Chilpancingo, 122; led attempt to take over insurgent governmental affairs, 129; commanding general, 130; quarrel with Rosains, 132, 147; made appeal to liberal party, 133; assumed leadership, 141; mentioned, 143, 148
- Rayón Movement, 57-67; see also Rayón, Ignacio
- Rayón, Ramón, brother of Ignacio and insurgent officer, 161
- Raz y Guzmán, Juan Bautista, lawyer and central figure of "Los Guadalupe," 85-86; part in smuggling printing press out of Mexico City, 87; mentioned, 90
- "Reasoning of General Morelos on the Opening of the Congress of Chilpancingo," address by Morelos, 117-118
- Rebelo, José, printer, 87
- Recopilación de las Indias*, 26
- Reglamento*, plan of government, 115-116
- "Relación general de mi viaje," account by Tadeo Ortiz, 144
- "*Relación histórica . . .*," account by Rosains, 129
- Reyes Arroyo, Eugenio, *cura* assigned to Churumuco, 14; census drawn up by, 20; mentioned, 23
- Río de las Balsas, 4, 13
- Río de San Antonio, Texas, location of gold mines, 105
- Robinson, John Hamilton, active in Southwest, 149
- Rodríguez Carnero, José Joaquín, legal rival of José Morelos for benefice, 8; property awarded to, 9; another struggle involving, 12; death of, 28

INDEX

- Rodríguez Carnero, José Romualdo, brother of José Joaquín Rodríguez Carnero, 28
- Roqueta Island, 81
- Roman Catholic Church, influence in New Spain, 16, 53; Morelos and, 55, 70; position in Constitution of 1812, 87; in Rayón's Constitution, 97; in Morelos' "Sentiments of the Nation," 116; his oath to defend, 121; in Bustamante's Declaration of Independence, 123; in Constitution of 1814, 136; Morelos charged with being an enemy of, 160, 164
- Rosains, Juan Nepomuceno, Morelos' secretary, 116; second-in-command, 129; commanding general, 130; defense of Puebla and Vera Cruz, 132; quarrel with Rayón, 132, 147; letter from Alvarez de Toledo, 150
- Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico, Bachelor of Arts awarded to Morelos, 9; Bachelor of Arts awarded to Miguel Hidalgo, 35
- Sabine River, 150
- Sacrificios, island, 141
- Salamanca, defeat of French forces at, 133
- Salazar, Father, 165; present at execution of Morelos, 166
- Saltillo, 59, 60, 61
- Samaniego, Saturnino, royalist commander, 74
- San Agustín de las Cuevas, 156
- San Antonio de Bejar, 140
- San Bautista de Apaseo, 6
- San Blas, 46, 81
- San Carlos, royalist brigantine, 81
- San Cristóbal Ecatepec, site of Morelos' execution, 165
- San Diego, convent of, 69; Hospital de, 71; plaza of, 72
- San Diego de Acapulco, fortress castle, 82
- San Felipe, 36
- San Idelfonso, see College of San Idelfonso
- San Juan Bautista de Apaseo, town, 2
- San Luis Potosí, 66, 121, 135
- San Martín, José de, 105, 132
- San Miguel, Antonio de, see Bishop of Michoacán
- San Miguel el Grande, 36, 38, 39
- San Nicolás College, Morelos at, 7-8; Hidalgo at, 7, 35, 40
- San Pablo Huizo, 81
- Santa Cruz, hacienda of, 24
- Santa Fé de Bogotá, 146
- Santa María, Vicente de, Franciscan friar, 33
- Santiago de Herrera, Nicolás, *cura* of Uruapan, 11, 137
- Santo Domingo, convent of, 69
- Santo Domingo, island of, 142, 144
- Semanario Patriótico Americano*, newspaper, 87, 107
- Seminario Tridentino, Morelos studies here, 9
- "Sentiments of the Nation," political and social program of Morelos, 116, 117; discussion of, 122
- Servant of the Nation, see José Morelos, Chapter IX, 111-124; specifically, 111, 114
- Sesma, Antonio de, escorts Rayón to Congress, 122; mentioned, 163
- Sierragorda, Count of, see Escandón y Llera
- Sierra Madre del Sur, 4, 46
- Sindurio, resident hacienda of Morelos' parents, 1
- Society of Jesus, proposed restoration of, 123
- Sonora, 135
- Sotero de Castañeda, José, signed Constitution of 1814, 135
- Soto Saldaña, Licenciado, site of "Casa de Morelos," 27
- Spain, invasion of, 31; mentioned, 36, 52, 78; political developments, 86; colonial administration, 103; mentioned, 116; declaration of independence from, 122; mentioned, 123; significant developments in, 133; mentioned, 143, 157, 160
- Spaniards, see Europeans, *gachupines*
- Spanish Constitution of 1812, see Constitution of 1812
- Spanish Cortes, Spanish representative institution, 34; installation of, 35; amnesty issued by, 71; election of delegates to, 85; convoked, 86; deputies to, 87; election for, 92; deputy election, 93; mentioned, 89, 121, 122, 133, 158, 160
- Sud*, periodical founded in 1813, 107
- Sultepec, 65, 67, 87, 97, 107
- Suplente(s)*, substitute to provincial deputation, 92, 93; mentioned, 115, 116
- Supreme National Junta, insurgent government formed by Rayón, Liceaga and Verduzco, 62, 63, 64, 66; oath to, 79; members of, 97, 98, 99, 116; mentioned in note by Morelos, 99; mentioned, 121, 129; instructions of, 157
- Supreme Tribunal, 154

INDEX

- Tabares, Mariano, part in David-Tabares affair, 49-50; ordered to negotiate alliance, 140
- Tabasco, province, 146
- Tacámbaro, 13, 25, 126
- Tadeo Ortiz de Ayala, Simón, insurgent diplomat, 142, 146
- Tamácuaro de la Aguacana, parish of, 13
- Tapia, Juan Antonio de, judge, 8
- Tasación*, special tax, 21, 23
- Taxco, 64, 66
- Tecpán, 44, 47, 51, 106, 115, 116, 121, 130, 131, 132, 135, 154, 163
- Tehuacán de las Granadas, 74, 75, 77, 98, 146, 154, 155, 163
- Tehuacán-Orizaba area, 74, 102
- Teja Zabre, Alfonso, quoted, 3, 28
- Tenango, 87, 98, 154, 156
- Teoxomulco, site of gold mines, 105
- Tepecuaculco, 156
- Tepetongo, hacienda of, 90
- Terán, José Manuel, insurgent officer, 161, 163
- Tesmalaca, 154, 155, 156
- Texas, 59, 140, 144, 145, 146
- Tierra caliente*, Morelos' first introduction to, 3; mentioned, 4, 7, 13, 26, 29, 44, 126
- Tigre*, privateer, 147
- Tirado, Fiscal José Antonio, presented charges against Morelos, 159
- Tiripitío, 134
- Tixtla, 46, 47, 50
- Tlacotepec, 108, 129; insurgent defeat, 130, 163
- Tlalchapa, 65, 126, 154
- Tlalpujahua, 60, 87, 107
- Tlapa, 63
- Tlaxcala, 135
- Toledo, José Alvarez de, see Alvarez de Toledo
- Toluca, 64, 65, 67, 98
- Torre, Licenciado Juan de la, Morelian historian, 1, 27
- Tres Palos, 45
- Trujano, Valerio, insurgent commander, 74
- Trujillo, Torcuato, royalist commander, 57
- Tunja, 146
- Turicato, curacy of, 24, 25
- Tuzantla, *cura* of, 62
- Un Congreso de Sabios, congress of learned men, 113
- United States, insurgent efforts to seek aid from, 58, 140-142, 151, 154; mentioned, 143, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149
- Uruapan, 11, 13, 130, 137
- Valladolid, see also Morelia, 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 13, 25, 27, 28, 29, 33, 35, 39, 40, 41, 48, 57, 60, 61, 66, 124, 126, 127; disaster at, 128, 129; name changed to Morelia, 166
- Valley of Mexico, 4
- Vélez, Pedro Antonio, commander of Acapulco port, 81, 82
- Venegas, Francisco Xavier de, Spanish officer and viceroy, 35, 45, 57, 58; his reward for Morelos' capture, 74; published Spanish Constitution of 1812, 87; activities in regard to printing and elections, 88
- Vera Cruz, 57, 63, 64, 66, 75, 77, 78, 81, 82, 116, 121, 130, 132, 141, 142, 147, 149, 163
- Verduzco, José Sixto, *cura* of Tuzantla and member of Supreme National Junta, 62, 90, 97, 99; connection with Michoacán, 98, 116; temporary president of Congress, 118, 119; fled to Tlacotepec, 129; signed Constitution of 1814, 135
- Vicario castrense*, army chaplain, 105
- Vicario, Leona, niece of Raz y Guzmán and wife of Quintana Roo, 86
- Victoria, defeat of French at, 133
- Victoria, Guadalupe, pseudonym of Manuel Félix Fernández, first constitutional president of Mexican republic, 48; connected with Los Guadalupe, 86; deserted Rosains, 132; mentioned, 146-147, 150, 161, 163
- Virgin of Guadalupe, 39, 106, 126
- Vocal(es)*, members of Congress, 92, 115
- Von Humboldt, Alexander, scientist, 17; excerpt from his *Ensayo político sobre el reino de la Nueva España*, 18
- Ward, Henry G., British Minister to Mexico, 71; mentioned, 73
- Washington, D. C., 113, 150
- West Florida, 141
- Yucatán, 146
- Yanhuitlán, 81
- Yarza, Remigio, 161
- Yermo, Gabriel, 32
- Zacatecas, 61, 66, 121, 135
- Zacatepec, 73
- Zacatlula, 44, 64, 131, 163
- Zapote gate, at Valladolid, 127
- Zitácuaro, 33, 51, 61; Supreme National Junta installed here, 62; mentioned, 63, 64; battle of, 65; mentioned, 73, 97

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Beecher had the stone set for her in the Venetian style to wear in *The Merchant of Venice*. Like almost everyone within Ellen's reach, Mrs Beecher became her friend, breaking her strict reserve to do so. As Ellen described her:

Mrs Beecher was very remarkable. She had a way of lowering her head and looking at you with a strange intentness, gravely, kindly, and quietly. At her husband she looked a world of love, of faith, of undying devotion. She was fond of me, although I was told she disliked women generally and had been brought up to think all actresses children of Satan.⁷

After commenting on the strictness with which Mrs Beecher had been brought up (her father, she told Ellen had once thrown hot soup all over her neck because her dress was cut to reveal it), Ellen added: 'That a woman who had been brought up like this should form a friendship with me naturally caused a good deal of talk. But what did she care! She remained my true friend until her death.'

The journey to Philadelphia was undertaken by private train, the company's first taste of American rail travel; according to Ellen, they normally filled eight cars, including those set aside for the freight. Irving had his own parlour car. Ellen, used to the English conception of privacy, soon discovered the American aversion to this curious British taste for what was regarded as concealment. Everyone seemed to walk freely through the coaches, however private they were supposed to be. The journey to Philadelphia was by American standards a short one, and they faced in this city what were reputed to be the severest audiences and critics in the United States. Broadly the Press was overwhelmingly enthusiastic, though opinion in Britain which was hostile to Irving was already known to journalists on this side of the Atlantic. The *Press*, referring to drawings which had appeared in *Punch* satirizing the aesthetic movement in England, said of Ellen's Ophelia, 'It is unfortunate that Du Maurier has taken Miss Terry as the model of the aesthetic set. The curly blonde hair,

delicate face, and soft, clinging robes remind one so often of *Punch's* caricature, that it was difficult to take it seriously.'

During the second week in December the company moved to Boston, travelling in sleeping cars, the comfort of which delighted them. They played in the Boston Theatre, claimed to be the largest in the United States and seating 3,000. Irving thought it magnificent, but, as at the Star, the dressing-room accommodation proved to be poor. Once more, audiences were enthusiastic and the critics somewhat divided over Irving's Hamlet and Shylock. In Boston the first snows fell, 'transforming the brown of autumn into a sea of white; the snow was a foot thick and the sleighs appeared in the streets, the bells on the horses sharp and clear. Irving went for a sleigh ride with Hatton, admiring the cleanliness of the wooden houses across the river, where anthracite was burnt instead of coal, no smoke appearing from the chimneys. On 15 December Ellen, free from the theatre, was guest of honour at the Papyrus Club, where 120 members of Boston's society came to meet her to the strains of the Germania Orchestra. Hatton noticed specially the different reactions to Ellen's success shown by American women in contrast to the English:

She captivated the women, all of them. It is easier for a clever woman to excite the admiration of her sex in America than in England. A woman who adorns and lifts the feminine intellect into notice in America excites the admiration rather than the jealousy of her sisters. American women seem to make a higher claim upon the respect and attention of men than belongs to the ambitious English women, and when one of them rises to distinction they all go up with her. They share in her fame; they do not try to dispossess her of the lofty place upon which she stands. There is a sort of trades-unionism among the women of America in this respect. They hold together in a ring against the so-called lords of creation, and the men are content to accept what appears to be a happy form of petticoat government. So the women of Boston took Ellen Terry to their arms and made much of her.⁸

Christmas was spent in Baltimore, where they opened on Christmas Day itself. Many of the company, wary of Christmas festivities in the States, had brought their own Christmas puddings with them. Among these was Ellen, who brought a pudding made for her by her mother. The journey was a fearful one; the eight coaches of the private train, coming from Boston to New Jersey on the first lap of the journey, had to be transported several miles down the Harlem river, hauled by a tug-boat.

The ploughs eventually got them through to Baltimore after a journey lasting forty-two hours, and the Christmas Day audience at the Academy of Music, where they were playing only a few hours after their arrival, was small owing to the fearful conditions of mud and slush in the streets. Nevertheless, Irving had insisted on an afternoon rehearsal of *Louis XI*. Loveday employed extra coloured labour to unload the scenery from the train. After the play the following night, Irving, Ellen and a small party sat down in the hotel to Christmas dinner and ate up Sarah's pudding. 'Well done; bless her heart,' cried Irving. The coloured servants were delighted with the flames when Stoker poured brandy over the pudding and lit it up. When Hatton left for his hotel the slush had iced over, and the city lay dead and encrusted around him.

After a few nights in Baltimore, the company moved to Brooklyn, a journey of some 500 miles; then on 5 January they went on to Chicago, over 1,000 miles farther. Fussy, Ellen's terrier, insisted on running through the streets by her carriage in the middle of the night when they went to join the Brooklyn ferry, which took them to their train. Fussy, who went with Ellen everywhere in America, had his own strip of carpet to lie on, and dragged it with him everywhere if no one took it for him. Hatton gives a description of the Lyceum principals gathered on the ferry:

Mr Terriss looks like a dashing Capt Hawksley on his travels – fur coat, cap, self-possessed air, and all. Mr Tyars wears a 'Tam O'Shanter' and ulster. He might be the laird of a Scotch

county, just come down from the hills. The grey-haired, pale-faced gentleman, muffled to the eyes in fur cap and comforter, is Mr Mead, whose imperial stride as 'the buried majesty of Denmark' is repeated here in response to the call of a friend in the cabin. Mr Howe carries his years and experience with an elastic gait, and a fresh, pleasant face. He is a notable figure in the group, dressed in every respect like an English gentleman – overcoat, hat, gloves. He has a breezy, country manner, and, if one did not know him, one might say 'this is a Yorkshire man, who farms his own land, going West to have a look at Kansas, and perhaps at Manitoba'. Mr Ball, the musical conductor, wears his fur collar and spectacles with quite a professional air. Norman Forbes brings with him ideas of Bond Street, and Robertson, who sings 'Hey, Nonnie', to the swells in Leonato's garden, is wrapped up as a tenor should be, though he has the carriage of an athlete. The American winter lends itself to artistic considerations in the matter of cloaks, coats, leggings, scarfs, and 'head-gear'. The ladies of the company have sought the hot shelter of the spacious saloon. Miss Terry pushes the swinging-door. 'I shall be stifled in there,' she says, retreating before a blast of hot air.⁹

Although Irving had resisted undertaking the one-night stands customary for touring companies, the immense journeys had none the less to be undertaken at what seemed now to be ever-increasing intervals. Irving had decided in Philadelphia to abandon a considerable part of the elaborate scenery he had hoped to take on tour with him. It was left in store at New York, and the productions were drastically simplified to make lading for the journeys and stage management more feasible. In a number of cases he divided his season at the larger cities into two separate stages. Though this gave him the opportunity to present a wider range of plays, it added greatly to the exhaustion of constant travel during the height of the American winter.

After Brooklyn the company moved to Chicago, where they were to appear at Haverly's Theatre for a longer stay of two

weeks. The city was snowbound, though the sun was bright and clear.

The year 1884 began with the worst winter in the United States for over twenty years, and the storms were devastating. Lake Michigan was frozen over for twenty miles from the land; the shores were barricaded with ice. Hogs for Chicago's notorious stockyards were frozen to death on the freight trains. Ellen, however, was taken with Irving for sleigh-rides along the lakeside, and shown something of the prospects for expansion planned for the great city, which had been twice burned down, and twice rebuilt.

Far from being a 'barbarous' city, Chicago proved immensely responsive to the Lyceum productions, and Ellen, who had expected the people to be 'a rough, murderous, sandbagging crew', found them instead to be wonderful audiences. She claimed she never played Ophelia better in the whole of her career than she did on this visit to Chicago, and that in the mad scene she had never 'felt such sympathy'. The box-office yielded over \$36,000 for the two-week season. Outside the theatre endless hospitality was pressed upon both Irving and Ellen. Then, on 20 January, they went to St Louis through snowdrifts which flanked the line, arriving finally at three o'clock in the morning. When daylight came they found the Mississippi ice-locked. After St Louis, all within the space of two weeks, came Cincinnati, Indianapolis, and Columbus. Everywhere Irving made speeches from the stage, and usually made gallant references to Ellen as his most valued partner. A return visit to Chicago was followed by two nights in Detroit; after this the company were given a brief holiday so that they could visit Niagara on 20 February.

Ellen's own reaction to Niagara is interesting, for she was always drawn to visit the Falls whenever she went to the States:

The first time I saw the great falls I thought it all more wonderful than beautiful. I got away by myself from my party, and looked and looked at it, and I listened – and at last it became dreadful and I was *frightened* at it. I would not go alone

again, for I felt queer and wanted to follow the great flow of it. But at twelve o'clock, with the 'sun upon the topmost height of the day's journey', most of Nature's sights appear to me to be at their plainest. In the evening, when the shadows grow long and all hard lines are blurred, how soft, how different, everything is! It was noontide, that garish cruel time of day, when I first came in sight of the falls. I'm glad I went again in other lights – but one should live by the side of all this greatness to learn to love it. Only once did I catch Niagara in *beauty*, with pits of colour in its waters, no one colour definite. All was wonderment, allurements, fascination. The last time I was there it was wonderful, but not beautiful any more. The merely stupendous, the merely marvellous, has always repelled me. The great canons give me unrest, just as the long low lines of my Sussex marshland near Winchelsea give me rest.¹⁰

While she was in Canada Ellen went tobogganning at the invitation of the Toronto Toboggan Club; it was a new sensation, like flying. She was escorted by a 'nice' Canadian who insisted on helping her up the hill afterwards. 'I didn't like *that* part of the affair quite so much,' she says; none the less, according to Hatton, she skimmed down the mountainside once again.

Much of the final part of the tour after Toronto (where the company appeared at the Opera House), consisted of return visits to cities in the States. They went from Toronto to Boston for a further week, and then on to Washington where Irving met President Arthur – 'well-read', he thought, and a 'gentleman'. After a week in Washington, the company briefly toured the cities of New England, leaving Ellen behind to enjoy a week's holiday in the capital in the meantime. This was followed by return visits to Philadelphia, Brooklyn and New York. Ellen found Philadelphia a unique American city:

Philadelphia, as I first knew it, was the most old-world place I saw in America, except perhaps Salem. Its red-brick sidewalks, the trees in the streets, the low houses with their white marble cuffs and collars, the pretty design of the place, all give

it a character of its own. The people, too, have a character of their own. They dress, or at least *did* dress, very quietly. This was the only sign of their Quaker origin, except a very fastidious taste – in plays as in other things.¹¹

While playing in Brooklyn they stayed in New York, crossing the bridge at night after the performance was over. 'I shall never forget how it looked in winter,' wrote Ellen, 'a gigantic trellis of dazzling white, as incredible as a dream . . . It looks as if it had been built by some power, not by men at all.' It was at Brooklyn that a reception was given on 29 March to Irving and Ellen by the Hamilton Club, and the *Brooklyn Times* reported Ellen's appearance in detail:

Miss Terry, over whom some of the younger ladies were mad with curiosity, was completely hemmed in, and was given no opportunity to move about, as Irving did. She sat during intervals in an old arm-chair covered with red plush. She wore an artistic gown, with a Watteau plait. Her fair hair curled from beneath a round French hat, covered with brown velvet, and with a dark feather. At her neck was an eccentric scarf of orange-coloured satin.¹²

The final month of the tour was spent in New York at the Star Theatre. Her *Much Ado about Nothing* was staged with its full settings, and the Press had nothing but praise for Ellen's Beatrice; it was called 'her greatest triumph'. 'She permeates the railling of Beatrice with an indescribable charm of mischievous sweetness,' said the *Tribune*, and spoke of her 'pliant, effortless power, and absolute simplicity'. So the tour ended, and the company returned to London in time to see the may-blossom after the snows of America. The profits gained by the Lyceum from the tour were £11,700. Irving's management was now not merely secure but free to undertake the most ambitious projects.

So successful had the tour been that for some time before it was finished Irving and his colleagues were poring over a map

of the United States planning a second visit the following autumn. Their London season did not begin until 31 May, but with the agreement reached to return in September for a tour (due to start this time in Quebec), barely three months were left in which to present plays at the Lyceum. Nevertheless, Irving managed to launch one new production in July, *Twelfth Night*, which had a poor reception from both audience and critics, and gave Ellen some initial trouble. She had to appear as Viola on the first and succeeding nights with a poisoned thumb; her arm was only saved from possible amputation by the prompt action of Bram Stoker's brother, a doctor from Ireland, who lanced the swelling one night when Ellen was half-way through the play. She had been in such pain that she had had to play the part sitting down, and the poison in her system resulted in the worst illness she was to experience while working at the Lyceum. She had still not fully recovered when the company travelled to Quebec, and her illness made it plain that Ellen needed a responsible understudy.

Before the second American tour (1884-5), Winifred Emery, daughter of the actor Sam Emery, was engaged for this purpose, and was soon to be given the opportunity to show her competence in spite of her youth. She was only twenty-two. Ellen, who was to play Viola better in America than she was in a position to do in London, was saddened to see how unpopular Irving was as Malvolio. The production had cost some £4,000, and the brief summer season at the Lyceum ended with a loss. Ellen, far from well, sailed with the company from Liverpool in September in the *Parisian*. Again, it was a rough crossing. According to L. F. Austin, Irving's secretary, who accompanied him on this second tour, Ellen suffered a 'terrible weariness' which 'nearly quenched the light in her eyes'. Though she seemed to recover once they had reached Quebec, she collapsed when they reached Montreal, and Winifred Emery had to take her place in both London and Hamilton, Ontario; she only rejoined them for Toronto. In the United States, where *Twelfth Night* proved more popular, they toured Boston, Pittsburg, Philadelphia, Chicago, Brooklyn and

New York. They spent Christmas Day in Pittsburg, and Christmas dinner was marred because the pudding Ellen had so carefully brought was discovered to reek of camphor through having been packed in one of the theatrical baskets. Nevertheless, the gentlemen of the company subscribed to give Ellen a silver tea-service to show how much they felt for her at this time.

Ellen, sick at heart for the children from whom she had been parted for nearly ten months out of the past fifteen, suddenly demanded that either Teddy or Edy be brought to her. She had, apparently, cabled Stephen Coleridge: 'Bring over one of the children.' The Hon. Stephen Coleridge, Ellen's close friend and the brother of Gilbert, was Teddy's guardian ('chosen by my mother - why I have never known') and was about to sail to New York. Teddy, now aged twelve, was sick on the voyage and took to sleepwalking on the ship during the daytime. Austin was dispatched to New York to bring him to Pittsburg; according to Austin, Teddy 'looked like a peach. . . . He is a perfect little gentleman and his love for his mother is delightful'. Apparently the little girls in the hotel wanted to date him. 'They wear captivating pinafores,' noted Austin, 'but he is not "mashed"'. When they moved to Chicago in January, Teddy got his first speaking part in an Irving production - the gardener's boy, Joey, in Act I of *Eugene Aram* - and walked on in many of the other plays.

According to Austin's letters home, Ellen enjoyed herself on the journey from Chicago to Boston:

In Henry's car seven of us had eaten an excellent lunch. Ellen *would* act as waitress and when I stole Loveday's pie and hid it, she pursued me with a fork. Teddy (Craig) has a little sledge, so when we stopped I took this out in the snow and gave him a ride. Then Ellen came and I pulled her about. Then she would make me sit on the sledge while she acted as a horse! I wonder what the Lyceum stalls would have thought if they could have seen the sight. We couldn't persuade Henry

to compromise his dignity by taking a ride. He stood on the steps of the car and gazed at us with a tragic air. Ellen was just like a schoolgirl, every bit as young in feeling as her boy.¹³

In Boston, Irving, who was never ill, developed a painful swelling on his leg which forced him to retire for three days at the end of February and let the company work without him. The result, said Austin, was near-panic. George Alexander, who had replaced Terriss, went on as Benedick with an imperfect knowledge of the lines, and in Irving's absence the reputation of the company rested squarely on Ellen. On 26 February, Austin wrote:

Last night Alexander played Benedick at very short notice and, except for a few slips, played it very well. Ellen had most of the burden on her shoulders and she rose to the occasion magnificently, rousing the audience to positive enthusiasm. I never saw her play the scene in the cathedral when Beatrice tells Benedick to kill Claudio with such fire and energy. We in the audience were all very nervous at first. Mrs Alexander ruined her fan by biting it in her excitement, and once or twice she tried to prompt her husband from a box near the stage. It was one of the most interesting evenings of the whole tour, for we sat on tenter-hooks, wondering what surprising improvement in the text would come next.¹⁴

The profits of this second American tour brought Irving £15,000, but work was resumed in London almost immediately on the company's return. On 2 May they reopened at the Lyceum with *Hamlet*, and were not to return to the United States until the autumn of 1887. But these two tours, amounting between October 1883 and April 1885 to some 14 months' continuous performance and a profit of £23,000, had added to the prestige of Irving as a great, if not the greatest, tragedian in the English-speaking theatre. It also proved to him beyond a doubt that the production of Shakespeare should become his prime responsibility.

It had shown him that, if London audiences and critics could at times become hostile, he could rely on his North American tours and the British provinces to bring him both popular and financial support. His confidence in himself as an actor and stage-director was confirmed, and he was determined to make Ellen Terry a permanent partner in his life upon the stage, and, he hoped, his partner in private life as well.

VII

SHAKESPEARE, MY SWEETHEART

Irving realized that Shakespeare alone could not sustain him at the Lyceum. His most urgent problem, therefore, was to obtain new plays with the right theatrical potentialities to suit his particular genius both as actor and stage-director. These plays must have pictorial possibilities to stretch the talents of his designers and scene painters, and the development of situations which were charged with the kind of emotion, either comic, pathetic, melodramatic or tragic, to which he responded as an interpretative artist. He was, of course, aware of the literary values in Shakespeare, but if Shakespeare, the dramatist, had not himself possessed such a profound sense of theatrical showmanship, Irving would never have been drawn to produce his work. It was the theatrical aspect of Shakespeare's plays rather than the poetic to which he responded, and this was the reason why he was prepared to enjoy fustian dialogue in the contemporary drama provided always that it sprang from some richly theatrical setting.

His taste was undoubtedly shared by his audiences both in Britain and America. They went to the Lyceum or to the theatres in which he appeared when on tour to share the same theatrical excitements and visual spectacles. Irving's approach in many respects anticipated that of certain film producers of today, who care little for subtleties or refinements of dialogue provided their basic theatrical instinct and their love for spectacle are fulfilled. Within the limits of this approach to the production of Shakespeare, Irving has never had an equal in the history of theatrical enterprise in Britain. But so far as contemporary plays were concerned, he was always prepared to rely on the revival of old

nineteenth-century favourites rather than venture on the production of new plays that did not stir his imagination. Nevertheless, he invested some £3,000 in commissioning new plays during the first four years of his management at the Lyceum. Undoubtedly the failure of the dramatists to supply the kind of script he wanted encouraged him to concentrate during this period on touring and to hire the Lyceum to other companies. In any case, the leading provincial centres were of first importance in consolidating an actor-manager's national reputation.

So the 1885 season at the Lyceum opened with revivals of *Hamlet*, in which Irving naturally was the star player, and of *Olivia*, which featured Ellen's performance. In *Olivia*, Terriss played Squire Thornhill, as he had done at the Court Theatre, and even Edy and Teddy were allowed upon the stage. Irving at first played the Vicar so stiltedly at rehearsal that Edy, now aged fifteen could stand his manner no longer and cried out, 'Don't go on like that, Henry. Why don't you talk as you do to me and Teddy? At home you *are* the Vicar.' Irving was not the least affronted by this outburst; in fact he found the point enlightening. 'A terrible child *and* a wonderful critic,' wrote Ellen, bursting with pride. At the opening night on 27 May, he played the part quite simply, and gave what she called a 'lovable performance'. However, he found this continual sweetness of manner trying, and was heard one night on leaving the stage to mutter 'Ba - a - a - a - a' in the wings.

But the time had come when a new play must be prepared for the repertoire. Wills, who had revised *Olivia* for the Lyceum production, had also been working on a much-simplified adaptation of Goethe's *Faust*. He wrote his play in verse, and with every accommodation to Irving's needs, the result, as Laurence Irving has remarked, was naturally much closer to Gounod than it was to Goethe. When the script had reached a form which was acceptable to Irving, he invited Ellen, the children and Alice and Joe Comyns-Carr to join him in a working holiday in Germany, where he hoped to gather local atmosphere and buy furnishings for the production.

Joe Comyns-Carr was by 1885 a member of the 'aesthetic movement'. He had become editor of the *English Illustrated Weekly* as well as director of the Grosvenor Gallery, the first centre at which the new styles in painting were exhibited. He was also beginning to establish himself as a playwright. The circle to which he and his wife belonged included Burne-Jones and Browning as well as the painter John Sargent and Henry James, who was now devoting his attention to writing novels. Alice's particular interest was in costume design, and she was soon to take charge of all Ellen's dresses at the Lyceum. The purpose of the expedition to Nuremberg was in effect to find 'locations' from which ideas for stage sets could be developed by Hawes Craven. Irving was anxious, too, for Alice's help in devising the best results from the library of books he acquired on costume and furnishings for the period of *Faust*, which was set in the fifteenth century.

With all the exactitude of Godwin, Alice and Ellen set about their research. The men, meanwhile, soon discovered Rothenburg, the picturesque medievalism of which made it appear to be in itself a composite stage set; Hawes Craven was at once summoned by telegraph from London. Meanwhile, Ellen and Alice toured the shops of Nuremberg searching for antique jewellery and other accessories useful on the stage. Alice, who knew German, also acted as interpreter. The whole thing developed into a glorious spending spree, and the prices asked were so low that Irving often insisted on giving more than the shopkeepers suggested. Crates of everything transportable, from furnishings to costume materials, were shipped back to London. Houses opened up when the local people learned that the great English actor and actress were planning a production of *Faust*; Irving was even serenaded by the local band, and he gave them a staggeringly large present, ostensibly to spend on beer. Hawes Craven was invited inside private houses to make sketches, and Ellen, knocking with her umbrella on the great door of Nuremberg Castle, used her charm to get herself shown round the building by the small daughter of the caretaker when it was officially shut. Typical of

Ellen's informality is the way Irving was rushed into Alice's bedroom when she was only half dressed in order that Ellen should give him a better view from Alice's window of a fire that had broken out in the distance. 'What a scene if only one could get it,' cried Irving.

Alice was invited to attend the rehearsals for *Faust* to help supervise the costumes – her first experience of seeing Irving at work as a stage-director:

Gone was the debonair, cheery holiday companion and in his place was a ruthless autocrat, who brooked no interference from anyone, and was more than a little rough in his handling of everyone in the theatre – except Nell. Irving allowed no one to watch him at work, and was ever ready with a flood of bitter satire if anyone accidentally strayed within his vision.¹

The audience took note of Ellen's costumes, which were correctly 'period' as distinct from the draperies long established by stage convention as suitable for the character of Margaret. In one scene, considered somewhat daring, Ellen had to begin to undress on the stage. Alice wrote:

A pair of tight sleeves and the fact that Gretchen did not have a lady's maid on the stage almost wrecked one gown. Finally Nell peeled them off inside out, but the next trouble was what garment was to be revealed underneath, for in those days we considered such things. At last we settled on a soft white petticoat. . . . On the first night there was a buzz of admiration and much whispered comment in the stalls, which I knew spelt success, when Nell appeared.

Margaret in *Faust* called for all the pathos at Ellen's command, and became one of her favourite parts. She was trained to use a real spinning-wheel on the stage. The production, which opened on 11 December 1885, featured great set-piece scenes, such as Nuremberg Cathedral, which reached their climax in the remarkable spectacle of the Brocken scene with its infernal paraphernalia lit by a combination of electricity, gas and calcium arcs.

Irving himself, naturally, appeared as Mephistopheles, clad from head to foot in scarlet. George Alexander played Faust. Of the critics neither William Archer nor Henry James could abide the show; the production, according to James, suffered from 'an abuse of pantomimic effects'. The kind of verses into which Ellen had to infuse her pathos were of this order:

To-morrow I must die,
And I must tell thee how to range the graves.
My mother the best place - next her my brother,
Me well apart, but, dearest, not too far,
And by my side my little one shall lie.²

According to Hiatt, the part of Margaret was occasionally taken over by Winifred Emery during the phenomenal run, spanning two seasons, which *Faust* achieved. Although it had cost £8,000 to produce, it ended by producing a profit for Irving of over £24,000 by 1887.

A brief interlude in the flow of production was another piece of fustian verse, *The Amber Heart* by A. C. Calmour, the rights of which Irving acquired specially for Ellen. She played the part of Ellaline for a single matinee on 7 June at the Lyceum, and with a youthful Herbert Beerbohm Tree making his initial appearance with her, Irving was for the first time able to see Ellen act from the front of the house. He was entranced, and wrote to her, 'I wish I could tell you of the dream of beauty that you realized.'³ He regarded the piece as sufficiently successful to be revived from time to time, both in Britain and America, but whatever its shortcomings it gave Ellen the chance formally to put the design of her future costumes into the hands of Alice Comyns-Carr. Until this time, they had been supervised by Patience Harris, whose brother was manager of Drury Lane Theatre; but Patience Harris favoured elaborate dresses. Ellen's taste, ever influenced by Godwin, was all for simplicity. One evening she went to dine with Alice and became excited by a plain, unstarched muslin frock she was wearing. 'I'm going to have a dress exactly like that,' she said in what Alice calls 'her usual direct manner'. 'You tell Pattie Harris just

how to get that crinkly effect,' she said, 'and let her make me up one at once. It's just the thing I want for Ellaline.' 'Well,' replied Alice, 'I twisted the stuff up into a ball and boiled it in a potato steamer to get the crinkles, but I don't quite see myself suggesting that idea to Patience Harris.'

Ellen insisted, and this finally led to the loss of Pattie Harris. From 1887, Alice took over the design of all Ellen's costumes, and she secured the help of Mrs Nettleship, the wife of the painter of animals, as her dressmaker. 'In the early days, when the range of material was still very limited, I resorted more than once to methods quite as unprofessional as boiling a frock in a potato steamer,' wrote Alice.

The winter of 1887-8 saw a provincial tour of Britain (Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester and Liverpool) and the third American tour, which included prolonged seasons in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and Boston, as well as a special visit on 19 March to the Military Academy at West Point, where *The Merchant of Venice* was put on after another train journey hampered by the formidable blizzards. The play was staged at West Point without scenery, just as it had been in Shakespeare's time. At the end of March the company returned to London having scored another triumph in America with the presentation of *Faust*.

No new productions were undertaken until the close of 1888. Irving, fresh from his tour of Paris with his friend Joe Comyns-Carr, returned to prepare his production of *Macbeth*, with which he planned to open on 29 December.⁴ *Macbeth*, according to Ellen, 'made a turning point in the history of the Lyceum'. The discussions before the decision to produce the play was finally reached had been taking place since 1887. Ellen had wanted to play Rosalind before she grew too old, but *As You Like It* had no obvious, prominent part for Irving. *Julius Caesar* had been rejected because Irving had only wanted to play Brutus, while Antony, the part which dominates the play, was usually considered to be the actor-manager's star-turn. So, with *Macbeth* in mind, Ellen and he had gone together to Scotland in August 1887 to search for 'local colour'. Ellen later found an entry in her diary:

'Visited the "Blasted Heath". Behold a flourishing potato-field! A smooth softness everywhere. We must blast our own heath when we do *Macbeth*.'⁵

Ellen had good reason to be nervous about playing Lady Macbeth. Her two strongest qualities on the stage were charm and vivacity in comedy and command of feeling in pathos. Not that she lacked attack. She had claimed often enough that charm by itself was insufficient in an actress; to back it and make it effective across the footlights strength was needed. Had not the single line 'Kill Claudio', made her audiences freeze when she spoke it as Beatrice? But Ellen's reason for favouring plays, however indifferent, which gave her the opportunity to exercise her virtuosity for exciting laughter and tears in her audiences, and for that matter in herself, was little different from Irving's pursuit of the macabre, the sardonic and the melodramatic. These performances were their stock-in-trade. While *Macbeth* was a part Irving had already played (indifferently it seemed) in 1885, and wanted now to attempt once again, there appeared at first little in the character of Lady Macbeth to suit Ellen's talents. All that sustained her, once she had accepted that she must undertake the part, was Irving's complete faith in her powers. However, she also knew that he was in love with her, and thought her perfect every moment she trod the stage. Could his judgment, therefore, be fallible?

Lady Macbeth was a part with a strong tradition of interpretation. A notable succession of actresses had imposed their dramatic image on the character and made her, it seemed irrevocably, a 'fiendlike queen' after the style of Clytemnestra. But, Irving in the course of his researches had come upon a lengthy essay on the play, signed G. Fletcher, in the *Westminster Review* of 12 August 1843. This scrutinized the traditional conception of the relationship of Lady Macbeth to her husband and produced an altogether different interpretation which appealed greatly to Irving's desire for innovation. The essay in the *Westminster Review* is concerned with the character of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, and discusses at length the tradition associated with the

overwhelming performance of the part by Sarah Siddons, which drove the more susceptible ladies of the 1780s and 1790s into hysterics. Hazlitt's celebrated commendation describes Mrs Siddons at work: 'We can conceive of nothing grander,' he wrote. 'It seemed almost as if a being of a superior order had dropped from a higher sphere to awe the world with the majesty of her appearance. Power was seated on her brow, passion emanated from her breast as from a shrine; she was tragedy personified.' Though Sarah Siddons, for temperamental reasons, played Lady Macbeth in the style of a fiendish woman driven by evil motives to destroy her virtuous and yielding husband by forcing him to commit murder, her own personal notes on Lady Macbeth have fortunately survived and show that her private view of the character differed greatly from the way in which she played her. She describes Lady Macbeth as 'fair, feminine, nay, perhaps, even fragile', a woman 'captivating in feminine loveliness' and possessing 'a charm of such potency as to fascinate the mind of a hero so dauntless, a character so amiable, so honourable as Macbeth'. At the end of the play, she writes, Lady Macbeth's 'feminine nature, her delicate structure, it is too evident, are soon overwhelmed by the enormous pressure of her crimes'.⁶ The essay goes on to argue that the plot to murder Duncan and seize the crown sprang originally from Macbeth, and that his wife, far from conceiving the idea, exceeded her own strength in her ceaseless efforts to give him the courage to complete the killing he had himself suggested.

If Mrs Siddons, England's greatest tragic actress, was capable of remoulding the celebrated character in order to suit her peculiar talents on the stage, even against her better judgment of the part, why should not Ellen abandon this seemingly false tradition and play the part in *her own way*? Ellen, who had a habit of arguing with herself on paper, pursued these thoughts to their logical conclusion!

Yes, Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth and Mrs Siddons's Lady Macbeth are two *distinct* persons and totally different . . . of

course as part of a *whole* Shakespeare's is the one which it *wd* be right to try and enact, but as a single, forceful dramatic figure, I believe Mrs Siddons's was far the most *effective* . . . far finer and probably beyond imitation. I cannot understand why Mrs Siddons shd write *down one* set of ideas upon the subject and carry out a totally different plan. Why? . . . because *one* way is well within her methods and physical presentation.

Now which of 3 courses – for and against?

1. Make up in every way. In spite of thin lips – build up thick ones. In spite of Roman nose and flashing black eyes – build a nez retroussé and weak, gentle, irresolute eyes – in place of nature's loud voice – low and soft, seductive. Be in fact (I'm afraid) a great actor – deceive audience into at least *thinking* all this.

2nd Method. Play to the best of one's powers – one's own possibilities. Adapt the part to my own personality with the *knowledge* that sometimes nature *does* freak and put an honest eye into a villain's head.

3rd Method. Don't play at all.⁷

Irving, preoccupied once more with another embodiment of evil, made Macbeth, in the words of his grandson Laurence Irving, 'a barbaric chieftain entirely lacking moral fibre and the courage of his dark convictions'. Having prepared his customary acting edition of the play, Irving had it printed and bound with interleaved blank pages for use by his players and production helpers. Still with grave misgivings about her capacity to fulfil a bold new conception of Lady Macbeth, Ellen settled down with the leather-bound Lyceum text and started to make a remarkable series of annotations. These scribbled notes represent in part a search for confirmation of anything which is essentially feminine in the character, and in part suggestions to herself as to how best to realize this on the stage. Her notes are a kind of conversation with herself – words are heavily underlined, written large or small for emphasis, decorated with exclamation marks. There is nothing academic about them – they are the immediate personal

reactions of one woman, an actress, to another woman, Shakespeare's lady. On the flyleaves to her working scripts Ellen Terry began to sketch her approach, first to Macbeth himself. 'A man of great *physical* courage frightened at a *mouse*,' she writes. 'A man who talks and talks and works himself up, rather in the style of an early Victorian hysterical heroine. His was a *bad* Nature and he became reflected in his wife. M. must have had a neglectful mother – who never taught him the importance of self-control. He has *none*! and he is obsessed by the one thought *Himself*.' Then she considers Lady Macbeth in relation to her husband: 'A woman (all over a *woman*) who *believed in Macbeth*, with a lurking knowledge of his weakness but who never *found him out* to be nothing but a brave soldier *and a weakling*, until that damned party in a parlour – "Banquet Scene" as it is called. Then, "something too much of this" she says and gives it up – her mistakable softening of the brain occurs – she turns quite gentle – and so we are prepared for the last scene madness and death.' Later Ellen adds: 'Yes, Lady M. was ambitious. Her husband's letters aroused intensely the desire to be a Queen – true to woman's nature, even more than to a man's to crave power – and power's display.'

Her conception of Lady Macbeth, taken scene by scene, is humane and penetrating. Her controversial interpretation broke the hitherto inflexible mould in which the part had been confined, that of the cruel and bitter-tongued virago. The new Lady Macbeth was a scheming and ambitious but very feminine woman who does not know her husband well enough to realize the profound evil that lies in him. She realizes her own limitations, as the great 'unsexing' speech reveals. Ellen knew that this speech would be the first exacting test of her capacities as a tragic actress. Beside the speech she notes: 'I *must* try to do this: 2 years ago I could not *even* have tried.' This Lady Macbeth is as afraid of her own weakness as she is of her husband's lack of nerve to undertake the action. So she beguiles him into murder in order to fulfil their secret longing for the throne, and uses every feminine device at her command to goad him into the single, necessary action. But Ellen cannot help her sense of humour breaking out:

'Be damned *charming*,' she writes, no doubt with an irony in the underlining. 'Now see – here is a beautiful plan which your wife has thought all out (the hellcat).' After the murder, she must show that Lady Macbeth does not know what to do with her husband except save him by taking the dagger back herself, and she sees the celebrated faint as perfectly genuine once Lady Macbeth realizes that they are saved by Macbeth's 'masterly explanation'. From now on, it is Macbeth who takes the lead, his true nature no longer inhibited; Lady Macbeth has only one further supreme moment in the relationship – when she has to save her husband from disaster in the banqueting scene. However, even during the murder scene, Ellen cannot help expressing some sympathy for Macbeth; against the line, 'Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more . . ."' she writes: 'The most awful line in the play, if one realizes what it means to his guilt-burdened mind. Poor wretch, he does not sleep after this.' After the banquet, which Ellen calls the 'royal tea-party', Lady Macbeth collapses, leaving all initiative to her husband. She is finished, and the sleepwalking scene is her finale.

In the flyleaves at the end of her copies, Ellen Terry once more summed up the results of her study of the play. Of Macbeth she says:

'With all his rant and bombast he had "Lucidity" – and never belittled his crime – *he* never said, "a little water clears us of this deed". He was far-seeing – therefore he had less excuse – for his crime was more deliberate – the witches turned his head (as witches will do!). His aim was kingdom.'

But Lady Macbeth, she says,

'is full of womanliness' and 'is capable of *affection* – she *loves her husband* – Ergo – *she is a woman* [doubly underlined] – and she knows it, and is half the time *afraid* whilst urging Macbeth not to be afraid as she loves a *man*. Women love *men* [doubly underlined].

On 6 November, she wrote to her friend Calmour, author of

The Amber Heart, from Margate, where she had retired to continue her study of Lady Macbeth. 'I have seen *very few* people, and I have been absorbed by Lady Mac, who is *quite unlike* her portrait by Mrs Siddons! She is *most feminine*, and altogether, now that I have come to *know the lady well*, I think the *portrait is much the grander of the two!* But I mean to try at a true *likeness*, as it is more within my means.'

Yet Ellen remained uncertain of herself. Irving wrote to encourage her while in the throes of the crowd rehearsals:

Tonight, if possible, the last act. I want to get these great multitudinous scenes over and then we can attack *our* scenes. . . . Your sensitiveness is so acute that you must suffer sometimes. You are not like anybody else. You see things with such lightning quickness and uncerring instinct that dull fools like myself grow irritable and impatient sometimes. I feel confused when I'm thinking of one thing, and disturbed by another. That's all. But I do feel very sorry afterwards when I don't seem to heed what I so much value. . . . I think things are going well, considering the time we've been at it, but I see so much that is wanting that it seems almost impossible to get through properly.⁸

After the dress rehearsal he wrote again:

You will be splendid in this part. The first time it has been *acted* for many years.

The sleeping scene will be beautiful too – the moment you are in it – *but* Lady M should certainly have the appearance of having got out of bed, to which she is returning when she goes off. The hair to my mind should be wild and disturbed, and the whole appearance as distraught as possible, and disordered. . . .

Macbeth opened at the Lyceum on 29 December 1888: 'Mother was in agony over it,' remarked Gordon Craig. It was, as had been forecast, an immediate cause of controversy in the press, but this only encouraged audiences to crowd out the theatre for

150 nights. As always with Irving, the spectacle was tremendous; a popular Scottish landscape painter, Keeley Halsewell, had designed the sets which Hawes Craven and his men had carried out; Sir Arthur Sullivan had composed the incidental score. The crowd scenes were magnificently dressed: 'Henry brought his manipulation of crowds to perfection,' wrote Ellen.

By the opening night, curiosity was at its height. The *Pall Mall Gazette* had even published a mock interview with Shakespeare, who was represented as saying:

I think of her as a handsome woman, no doubt, and 'feminine' most certainly; Scmiramis and Messaline were intensely feminine. If you come to that, who was ever more feminine than Mrs Siddons herself? . . . A fragile Lady Macbeth may be conceivable, for genius can do anything – it made Pritchard genteel and Garrick six feet high – but other things being equal, I'd back a thirtecn-stone woman against a seven-stone sylph in the part.⁹

The *St James' Gazette* had an article on the day itself attempting to forecast how she might interpret the part, for this was, of course, a carefully kept secret. Comyns-Carr, however, wrote a pamphlet discussing the character along the same lines as the long-forgotten piece in *The Westminster Review*. Ellen, with Alice to design her dresses for her, was determined to present a striking picture to the eye; she was discovered, in the words of Hiatt, 'with blanched face and copper-coloured hair, clad in magnificent draperies which glowed with the metallic lustre of the wings of green beetles'. Alice herself describes how she conceived Ellen's most celebrated costume:

The dress which was most talked about was that which Nell wore as Lady Macbeth in the first scene, and it was in this costume that Sargent painted her. The designing of this dress had cost me many anxious hours of thought, for in those times there was not such a wealth of material to choose from as is the case today, and more often than not the exact colours I

needed to get my effects could not be obtained in England at all. I was anxious to make this particular dress look as much like soft chain armour as I could, and yet have something that would give the appearance of the scales of a serpent. Suddenly I had an inspiration. I had just crocheted a little shawl in soft woollen tinsel for my mother, and, seeing it hanging on the back of a chair, I said to myself, 'That's how I'll get my effect.' Mrs Nettleship brought the fine yarn for me in Bohemia – a twist of soft green silk and blue tinsel. I then cut out the patterns from the diagrams in the wonderful costume book of Voillet le Duc, and the yarn was crocheted to match them. When the straight thirteenth-century dress with sweeping sleeves was finished it hung beautifully, but we did not think that it was brilliant enough, so it was sewn all over with real green beetle-wings, and a narrow border in Celtic designs, worked out in rubies and diamonds, hemmed all the edges. To this was added a cloak of shot velvet in heather tones, upon which great griffins were embroidered in flame-coloured tinsel. The wimple, or veil, was held in place by a circlet of rubies, and two long plaits twisted with gold hung to her knees.¹⁰

This dress, which so excited Sargent, made Oscar Wilde remark:

'Judging from the banquet, Lady Macbeth seems an economical housekeeper, and evidently patronizes local industries for her husband's clothes and the servant's liveries; but she takes care to do all her own shopping in Byzantium.' Sargent's reaction is described by Alice Comyns-Carr:

When Ellen Terry came on in the first scene reading the letter, in the green and blue gown like chain armour, studded with real beetle-wings, he said: 'I say!' But it was during the next scene, when Nell in the same dress but wearing over it the heather velvet cloak embroidered with fiery griffins, swept out of the castle keep to greet the old King that Sargent first conceived the original idea for his famous picture of Ellen

Terry as Lady Macbeth. He made a study in oils of her descending between lines of bowing Court ladies, but then, deciding that a portrait of Ellen alone would be more effective, he forsook his first idea, and painted the picture now in the Tate Gallery, which shows her, a simple, exultant figure, with her arms stretched up holding the crown triumphantly over her head, and the sweeping sleeves of her gown hanging on each side to the ground.¹¹

The critics were by no means convinced by this new interpretation of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, although Irving, according to Ellen, himself preferred his performance in this part even to his Hamlet. Ellen felt his conception was right ('clear as daylight'), but his carrying out of the conception unequal. 'He was tempted by his imagination to do more than any actor can do.' How she wished that he, and not herself, could have undertaken the sleep-walking scene: 'Henry's imagination was always stirred by the queer and the uncanny. This was a great advantage in *Macbeth* in which the atmosphere is charged with strange forces. How marvellously he could have played Lady Macbeth in the sleep-walking scene, which ought above all things to be uncanny.' There were even rumours that she wanted to resign from the part, and these were mentioned in *Punch*, in which two articles on the production appeared. Irving at once scotched the rumour in a letter to Burnand, the dramatic critic; 'Ellen Terry has made the hit of her life. She really begins to like her Ladyship and plays it wonderfully.' But Labouchère had written of Irving in *Truth*:

Clever as ever, alert to catch the shifting straws of public opinion, knowing full well that Miss Ellen Terry is, perhaps, the most popular actress on the stage at the present time, he has persuaded himself that the Lady Macbeth who, thirteen years ago, was a shrew of the most determined type . . . is in reality, the sweetest, most affectionate character that ever drew breath . . . A *Macbeth* based on recollection of *Eugene Aram*, is now accompanied by an aesthetic Burne Jonesy, Grosvenor Gallery version of Lady Macbeth, who roars as gently as any

sucking dove. . . . At the same time it should be stated, in all fairness, that such a magnificent show as the new *Macbeth* has never been seen before. Mr Irving has proved that he is the first of living stage-managers, a man with a mind to conceive and a head to direct, for all the boasted Shakespearian revivals of Macready, Phelps, and Charles Kean pale before the new Lyceum splendours.¹²

Two critics have left us their exact impressions of Ellen's performance. Here is part of the notice in the *Daily Chronicle*:

Without such an affectionate yet determined woman as Miss Ellen Terry makes Lady Macbeth, the newly-invested Thane of Cawdor, as illustrated by Mr Irving, would never have laid violent hands on Duncan. After being the confidant she becomes the guide, and urges him forward to ruin whilst she believes it will bring him peace. . . . The masterful spirit of Miss Ellen Terry's Lady Macbeth when employed upon her husband's advancement is still more noticeable in the second act. With her homely dress of sober hue, and with bright auburn tresses that are sometimes allowed to fall in two long plaits almost to her feet, the Lady Macbeth of Miss Terry has no outward resemblance to any other character she has played. The voice is the same, her movements are as eloquent as the words she has to speak, but all else is different. The new Lady Macbeth feels that her husband may fail at the very last, so she nerves herself to give him renewed courage.¹³

And here, part of the review in the *Morning Post*:

The woman who, in a quaint and indescribably beautiful costume, read by the light of the fire the letter of her husband, pausing to re-read the passages that most impressed or astonished her, and that then threw herself back in the long oaken chair to dream of the arrival and the fortunes of her king and lover, might have stood in the Court at Camelot. . . . No less wonderful was the creature who, with hair blanched with sorrow and eyes steeped in a slumber that was not rest, stood like a spirit at

the foot of the stairs, as she came to visit the scenes of past suffering and crime, and sought in vain to cleanse her hands from the imaginary stain. A creature so spiritual, so ineffable, has never perhaps been put on the stage. Is this Lady Macbeth? Who shall decide? That it is not the Lady Macbeth of tradition or of Mrs Siddons we know. It is scarcely a Lady Macbeth we realize. It is, perhaps, one of which we have dreamed. Shakespeare, at least, it may be said, would have hailed it with delight as revelation, if not as interpretation. In the great murder scene, very powerfully played, this was not the woman to fill Macbeth with her own resolution. It might, however, be the woman to madden him to things beyond his customary reach.

What Ellen treasured most was, perhaps, a letter she had from her father: 'Nelly dear your performance of Lady Macbeth was *fine* . . . Don't allow the critics to interfere with your own view of the part . . . There will be thousands who will think otherwise, and, who knows, but that the experts may, before the end of the run of the piece, be converted . . . I had no opportunity to tell you on Saturday how beautiful you looked, how exquisite were your dresses . . . It was a grand performance of a most intellectual conception. . . . My joy was prodigious: Always your loving Daddy.'¹⁴

'There was much diversity of opinion about my Lady Macbeth,' wrote Ellen. 'It was a satisfaction to me that some people saw what I was aiming at. Sargent saw it, and in his picture is all that I meant to do.' Sargent's portrait was exhibited at the New Gallery in Regent Street, where there were, according to Ellen, 'dense crowds round it day after day'. Oscar Wilde, who had moved with his wife Constance to a house in Tite Street, decorated for him by Godwin and Whistler, was delighted to find Sargent's studio near by. He wrote: 'The street that on a wet and dreary morning has vouchsafed the vision of Lady Macbeth in full regalia magnificently seated in a four-wheeler can never again be as other streets: it must always be full of wonderful possibilities.'¹⁵

Ellen liked the portrait. 'It is a splendid picture,' she wrote to

her friend Amy Dickens. 'Oh dear, oh dear, if I were *paid* for all this sitting, my face would be my fortune.' And in another letter: 'The carriage is at the door to take me to Mr Sargent's – I'm dressed up as Lady Mac (and looking 'a sight' in the daytime!).' In her memoirs she writes:

I have always loved the picture, and think it is far more like me than any other. Mr Sargent first of all thought that he would paint me at the moment when Lady Macbeth comes out of the castle to welcome Duncan. He liked the swirl of the dress, and the torches, and the women bowing down on either side. He used to make me walk up and down his studio until I nearly dropped in my heavy dress, saying suddenly as I got the swirl: 'That's it, that's it!' and rushing off to his canvas to throw on some paint in his wonderful inimitable fashion! But he had to give up *that* idea of the Lady Macbeth picture all the same. I was the gainer, for he gave me the unfinished sketch, and it is certainly very beautiful.¹⁶

Ellen's humanizing treatment of Shakespeare's women characters was to be seen in four plays at the Lyceum, all of them in the range of tragedy – Katherine in *Henry VIII* (1891), Cordelia in *King Lear* (1892), Imogen in *Cymbeline* (1895) and Volumnia in *Coriolanus* (1901). Her only opportunity for comedy lay in the revivals which Irving constantly introduced, more especially while on tour, but Ellen during the 1890s had to reckon with the hard fact that she was no longer young. She was already forty-six when she first played Cordelia, and forty-nine when she first played Imogen. But her embodiment of these parts remained youthful and imaginative. In all she played eleven Shakespearean characters with Irving;¹⁷ after his death she composed a series of lecture-recitals in which she discussed not only the characters she had played, such as Beatrice, Portia, Lady Macbeth, Desdemona and Juliet, but some of the women she never played, such as Rosalind and Cleopatra.

Shakespeare, she once said to Irving, was the only man she had ever really loved. She implied that she had turned to Shakespeare's

works for comfort in the days of her misery after the parting from Watts when, as she put it, she had forsworn the society of men, yet wanted the sympathetic attention of a lover. She discovered then, if not before, the fascination of Shakespeare's women, whom she came to regard almost as if they were real people. 'Wonderful women!' she said to the audiences at the lectures she was to give in later years. 'Have you ever thought how much we all, and women especially, owe to Shakespeare for his vindication of women in those fearless, high-spirited, resolute and intelligent heroines?' She believed Shakespeare had liberal ideas about women which long pre-dated the 'Women's Movement' of Victorian times. Shakespeare obviously had a predilection for 'women of strong character, high-spirited, quick-witted and resourceful'. These were the women Ellen liked to interpret. 'Shakespeare,' says Ellen, after praising the magnificent stand of Emilia against the half-mad Othello, 'is one of the very few dramatists who seem to have observed that women have more moral courage than men.'

In her lectures Ellen grouped the women in Shakespeare's plays separately as 'triumphant' and 'pathetic', though this was for convenience only, because, as she says, 'Shakespeare's characters are far too idiosyncratic to fit this or that mould.' She likes Don Pedro's description of Beatrice – one of the triumphant women – as a 'pleasant-spirited lady' and quotes a French medieval description of Margaret of France as the image in which she played Beatrice: 'Her eyes are clear, and full of fire; her mouth is fine - intellectual with something of irony, of benevolence, and of reserve. A singular countenance where the mind and the heart both rule.' 'Beatrice's repartee in her encounters with Benedick,' said Ellen in her lectures on triumphant women, 'can easily be made to sound malicious and vulgar. It should be spoken as the lightest raillery, with mirth in the voice, and charm in the manner.' Although she tends, as Lucentio says, to be over-shrewd of tongue, 'yet when her heart speaks seriously, Beatrice listens seriously'.

It is from these lectures, as well as from her notes in the privately-printed interleaved copies of the plays which Irving prepared,

that we learn most about Ellen's response to the principal characters she played. Portia, of course, is another triumphant woman, and another high-spirited Renaissance lady. 'There are', she says, 'several ways in which Portia can be played – I have tried five or six ways myself, but I have always come back to the Italian way, the Renaissance way.' She hated the German tradition of playing Portia for low comedy – wearing a fierce moustache in the trial scene, for instance. She saw Portia as a great and wealthy lady, used to a fine and very independent way of life, and to wearing beautiful clothes. Her speech of submission to Bassanio, who is 'so manifestly inferior to her', is a courteous gesture which in no way threatens her independence of character. She ended her lecture on the triumphant women (Beatrice, Rosalind, Volunnia, the Merry Wives and Portia) with a recital of the mercy speech, which, she says, she regarded as 'a thing "ensky'd and sainted"', like the Lord's Prayer, with "the same beautiful simplicity and the same beautiful ideal of justice".'

By using the term 'pathetic' for the other group of Shakespeare's women, Ellen points out that she does not mean they lacked character or courage. Rather, she sees them as 'small and slim, of rather frail physique'. The pathetic group include, notably, Lady Macbeth; 'I don't conceive of Lady Macbeth as a robust muscular woman, but as a delicate little creature, with hyper-sensitive nerves.' She regards her, as we have seen, as sustaining her husband to the point of his own self-destruction. 'In plain prose,' says Ellen, 'she has a nervous breakdown' and dies of remorse. The other pathetic women she considers to be Viola, Desdemona, Juliet, Cordelia, Cleopatra, Katherine, Hermione and Imogen. She had played all of these except Cleopatra, whom she believes should be played in an ebullient, shallow manner. Her passion is neither great nor sincere, yet that is how she is mostly played. 'Shakespeare,' says Ellen, 'has done what no other writer, novelist, dramatist or poet has done – told the truth about the wanton.'

With the exception of Ophelia, Ellen is against the 'pathetic' women being presented as if they were weak. Desdemona, in

particular, is a strong-minded girl, with 'something of the potential nun in her'. She has rejected all suitors except Othello, and to him she 'consecrates' her love, overthrowing convention for his sake. Perhaps Ellen for the moment conceives Desdemona in her own image:

I have said she is a woman of strong character. Once she has consecrated herself to Othello, she is capable even of 'down-right violence' of all the conventions for his sake. But I think by nature she is unconventional. Othello's doubts that she is chaste are usually made to seem absolutely monstrous in the theatre, because Desdemona's unconventionality is ignored. She is not at all prim or demure; on the contrary, she is genially expressive, the kind of woman who being devoid of coquetry behaves as she feels. Her manner to Cassio might easily fertilize the poisonous seed of suspicion Iago has sown in Othello's mind. The pertinacity with which she begs Othello to reinstate Cassio does not strike me as evidence that she is a rather foolish woman, lacking in insight. Let an actress give a charming 'I'm really not asking much of you' tone to Desdemona's suit to her husband, and a very different impression will be produced. Her purity of heart and her charity (charity 'thinketh no evil') are sufficient explanation of her being slow to grasp the situation. It is not until she has been grossly insulted and brutally assaulted that she understands. Her behaviour from that dreadful moment should surely convince us that she is not a simpleton, but a saint.¹⁸

Hence the marvellous contrast devised by Shakespeare of opposing Emilia's sexual cynicism to Desdemona's pure faith in love which is expressed in the scene between them shortly before Othello murders his wife.

Juliet, she says, also possesses this 'inward freedom' which produces the moral courage Shakespeare valued in women. Juliet – 'this passionate young Italian' – achieves a maturity well beyond her fourteen years; and Ellen supports the traditional saying that 'an actress cannot play Juliet until she is too old to look like

Juliet'. Like Desdemona, once she loves she is fearless in love, and her spirit is never broken, even by the worst terrors of her situation; the contrast Shakespeare makes here is between the worldliness and depravity of the Nurse and the pure fire of Juliet's unalterable love. The greatness of Juliet's final speech must test the most experienced actress. 'An actress must be in a state of grace to make that speech hers! She must be on the summit of her art where alone complete abandonment to passion is possible!'

Ellen was to play the younger women of Shakespeare until she was herself nearly fifty. She first appeared as Cordelia in the Lyceum production of *King Lear* in 1892. 'Cordelia is a most difficult part,' she said, 'so little to say, so much to feel.' Still waters run deep, thought Ellen. 'Rarely does an actress fathom the depths of those still waters.' Yet the continuity of the Lyceum productions demanded that Ellen encompass the mature Queen Katherine of Aragon in the same year as she played the youngest of Lear's daughters. 'Perhaps some of you,' she said to the audience who came to her lectures, 'have a daughter, who like Cordelia is extremely reticent, loves you dearly, but never gushes. Perhaps there is a daughter here who knows exactly what Cordelia means when she says her love is "more richer than her tongue".'

Imogen was another of the much-wronged, much-loving women Ellen was called upon to play comparatively late in life. Though then forty-eight, Imogen was a part she loved. 'When I am asked which is my favourite part, her name rises spontaneously to my lips. She enchants me, and so I can find no fault in her.' Again, there seems an unconscious affinity between this Shakespearean character and Ellen herself. 'Imogen is impulsive above all things. Her impulses are always wholehearted ones too. She never does anything by halves! . . . So swift are Imogen's changes of mood that the actress who plays her has hard work to make her a consistent character. Her heart has reasons that reason cannot understand.' Ophelia alone of all the 'pathetic' women seemed to Ellen weak and fearful: 'Her brain, her soul and her body are all pathetically weak.' Frightened of her father, above all frightened

of Hamlet, whom she is incapable of understanding, madness is incipient in her nature, and, 'poor derelict', she is left alone, and unguarded, to fall away in death. Ellen, in her old age, always concluded her lecture on the 'pathetic' women by re-enacting for her audience the madness scene from *Hamlet*.

Of the older women in Shakespeare, Ellen first played Katherine in 1892 and Volumnia in 1901. She was convinced that, however many collaborators Shakespeare had for *Henry VIII*, he wrote every line of Queen Katherine. 'Who but Shakespeare could have shown in a few deft touches how the elements are mixed up in her nature, pride and humility, rebelliousness and resignation, hardness and softness? She reminds her of Imogen and of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*. 'The loyalty Hermione shows to the husband who has slandered her, without abating a jot of her dignity, reminds us of Katherine's to Henry. Hermione has been cruelly and falsely accused. Yet she has more pity for her accuser than for herself.' Katherine, thought Ellen, is very Spanish, and showed 'Shakespeare's sensitivity to racial characteristics', like the Italian quality of Juliet and the Roman quality of Volumnia, who was not a 'pathetic' woman, of course, but 'triumphant'. Shakespeare's love of contrast leads him to place this 'lion-hearted, patriotic mother' against Virgilia, Coriolanus's timid, sensitive wife. Volumnia is a noble Roman. When Ellen played her, she knew she was miscast.

Irving's golden successes of the 1880s were rarely equalled during the succeeding decade, which proved for him a costly and at times even a disastrous period. In spite of his unflagging energy, his age began to tell during the later 1890s, when he was approaching sixty. The costs of his productions rose steadily without the assurance of an equal rise in the box-office returns. Above all, newer, alien forms of drama were emerging – the realistic, contemporary writing of Pinero and Henry Arthur Jones, the wit of Wilde, the theatrical tornado led by Ibsen as well as the critical revolution represented by Bernard Shaw, whose pitiless attacks on Irving and whose adulation of Ellen added to the excitement of dramatic criticism in the 1890s.

Of the Shakespearean productions, *King Lear* (1892), *Cymbeline* (1896) and *Coriolanus* (1901) between them barely accounted for six months, and could not recover their production costs. *Henry VIII* (1892) on which Irving spent £12,000, ran eight months – 203 performances – but even so the season resulted in a loss. Only by undertaking long and arduous tours, more especially in the United States, could Irving hope to sustain the lavish quality of his productions. Apart from *Coriolanus*, in which both he and Ellen were miscast, Irving's performances in the other plays were interesting, to say the least. As Wolsey in *Henry VIII* he found himself compared to Cardinal Manning, who died a few days after the opening performance on 5 January 1892. According to Hiatt, Ellen played the part of Katherine with great tenderness; indeed, he wondered if she were not 'too winning, too graceful, too obviously attractive'. There was, he says, 'no hint of the matron', though in the trial scene she showed dignity and a 'fiery scorn' of a surprising strength. Again she performed in the shadow of Sarah Siddons, but the result, according to Percy Fitzgerald, was an 'astonishing' achievement. 'She let us see the woman's heart,' writes Pemberton. Yet she herself says, 'The production was magnificent, but I was not keenly interested in it, or in my part.'¹⁹

Ellen's warmth and tenderness as Cordelia, according to Clement Scott, saved Irving's production of *King Lear*. Irving miscalculated his performance on the opening night, and grew inaudible in his efforts to create a study in imbecility. Ellen herself was forced to admit to him that she could not distinguish what he was saying. Ellen wrote to her friend Stephen Coleridge:

It was the nervousness of a first night: he is perfectly intelligible *now*.

I have told him the 'whole truth', but no number of people 'telling him the truth' could make him articulate on the first night of a great part.

It was *not* perversity with him oddly enough it is a want of knowledge of *where he does it!*

I told him last night of 3 separate examples, and he went on the stage and spoke those three bits as clearly as they could be spoken by anyone. It's strange that *such* an actor as he shd fail to understand *how to convey to a crowd*. He understands himself and thinks everybody else does!²⁰

With a brilliant act of readjustment, Irving changed the manner of his speech, discarding the assumed voice and returning to his own. The result, according to Graham Robertson, who went back to the Lyceum within a week, was 'magnificent, its pathos terrible'. But the damage had been done, and the audiences fell away. But, Graham Robertson adds, Ellen's Cordelia was 'lovely and gracious, she *was* Cordelia, as she had been Portia, though I regret to say that, when studying the character, she wrote "Fool" in large letters against the young lady's refusal to admit her love for her old father'.

As Imogen, Ellen at the age of forty-nine, according to Graham Robertson, achieved:

Such a radiant embodiment of youth that when she first appeared the audience gasped – there was a silence, then thunders of applause. In the 'Milford Haven' scene her outburst of almost delirious happiness dazzled and amazed: she seemed a creature of fire and air, she hovered over the stage without appearing to touch it. And as a companion picture was Irving's 'Iachimo', no scowling sinister villain, but a fascinating Italian gentleman, entirely without morals but with exquisite manners and a compelling charm which explained his successes as a liar and scoundrel.²¹

A. B. Walkley wrote that Imogen would

rank amongst her first-rate achievements. Sweet and tender, the soul of trust and innocence, full of girlish spirits in the few moments when cruel fate ceases to vex her, piteous beyond measure in her grief, radiant in her joy – hers is a figure that dwells in the memory as one of absolute beauty.

Ellen's Imogen was a wonderful conclusion to over thirty years of achievements in the youthful parts of Shakespeare.²²

Of the new plays by contemporary authors produced by Irving during the 1890s, Ellen appeared in eight between 1889 and 1899. In many of them her parts were nominal appearances in order to keep her before the public. The contemporary plays were increasingly chosen as vehicles for Irving's overwhelming talent. For Ellen, conscious of her increasing age and never vain of her achievements, such parts as Lucy Ashton in *Ravenswood* (1890), Rosamund in *Becket* (1893), Catherine in *Peter the Great* (1898), Sylvia Wynford in *The Medicine Man* (1898) and Clarice in *Robespierre* (1899) were saddening revelations that the great days of the Lyceum partnership were gradually declining. Once more she was becoming the 'useful' actress, but her complaints were rare. Of Rosamund in *Becket* she said to Graham Robertson: 'I don't know what to do with her. She is not there. She does not exist. I don't think that Tennyson ever knew very much about women, and now he is old and has forgotten the little that he knew. She is not a woman at all.' Yet she made the most of everything she was given to do. One night Robertson was standing with her behind the scenes before her entrance from a gallery after Rosamund has witnessed the murder of Becket in the cathedral. He became aware of her complete identification with the woman she was playing:

I looked round and found Rosamund de Clifford beside me, pale and breathless, her eyes fixed and full of a gradually growing horror, deaf and blind to everything but the mimic murder on the dark stage below. The dying words of Becket floated up – 'Into Thy hands, O Lord, into Thy hands' – she clutched my shoulder tightly, seeming to struggle for speech which would not come, until at last a long gasping cry broke from her lips as she tottered forward and began to run down the steps. Even as she ran the moment of identity with Rosamund passed, and Ellen Terry whispered back, 'Missed it again! I never can *time* that cry right.'²³

As Rosamund, he thought, 'she looked her loveliest, especially in the rich gown of her first entrance, a wonderful, Rossettian effect of dim gold and glowing colour veiled in black, her masses of bright hair in a net of gold and gold hearts embroidered on her robe'. Nevertheless the part was supernumerary.

As Lucy Ashton in *Ravenswood* she enjoyed her mad death scene, and one night after it was finished, she hid on the stage with Graham Robertson beside what appeared to be an immobile rock. But during the transformation scene at the close of the play, the rock began to move in the fading light, and it was only by a swift and dexterous crawl that the audience did not see them as the scenery disappeared. Ellen, says Robertson, was 'full of a youthful desire to be where she ought not to be and to see what was not intended for inspection'. Irving saw nothing of this escape; he had gone to his dressing-room.

Ellen always took an interest in what she wore. She delighted in the ingenuity exercised by Alice to get just the right effects for the stage – regardless of the unusual origin of the cloths she used. For Katherine of Aragon Ellen wore black satin the wrong side out – producing just the *right* steely silver 'because it was the *wrong* side!' The search for the right gold for another dress ended up with the purchase of seven gold lace antimacassars at Whiteleys; the result was magnificent on the stage, but excessively heavy to wear. Mrs Nettleship made her a bejewelled cloak for *King Arthur* which was so heavy she could scarcely breathe; 'Nettle's' seamstresses had to stand off-stage snipping away jewels to lighten the cloak while Ellen stood in the wings. What Ellen wore on the stage often affected women's fashions: for example the riding costumes in *Ravenswood* set the seasonal style in ladies' coats.

The Dead Heart (1889) was an indifferent play, but it gave Ellen the great pleasure of appearing as the mother to her own son for 185 performances. Teddy looked 'a lovely little gentleman', wrote Edward Burne-Jones to Ellen after seeing him play the Count St Valéry. Teddy also supported his mother as Alexander Oldworthy in *Nance Oldfield*, Charles Reade's play about a

popular actress of the eighteenth century, which Ellen bought for herself, and even directed in a 'great hurry' to act as a curtain-raiser to Irving's revival of *The Corsican Brothers* in May 1890. Ellen's memory was becoming increasingly unreliable, and she and Teddy had to have their parts written out and pinned all over the furniture on the stage. Ellen was to revive *Nance Oldfield* constantly in succeeding years, and when Teddy was no longer with her to play his part, Martin-Harvey, Harcourt Williams, and Irving's son Laurence were among the actors who followed him. Irving thought highly of Teddy's talents, and wrote to Ellen in June 1891: 'He'll be a splendid comedian in time and a genial one.' After walking on and playing small speaking parts, Gordon Craig became a prominent supporting player in the Lyceum company from 1889 to 1897, though he frequently broke away to join touring companies and to direct plays on his own account. At the Lyceum he was paid £5 a week, rising to £7 in 1891; he was later to play, among other parts, Moses in *Olivia*, which he enjoyed, Henry Ashton in *Ravenswood*, and Cromwell in *Henry VIII* – all before he was twenty. Later he played Oswald in *King Lear*, and Edward IV in *Richard III* – 'a really great performance' writes Ellen. In 1894 he married and, to Ellen's initial regret, gradually withdrew from acting in favour of the graphic arts of stage design and direction. In small touring companies, or companies performing short seasons in provincial theatres, he was to play Hamlet, Macbeth and Romeo. Edy also joined the Lyceum company in 1887, playing small parts, but she too turned finally to stage direction and, in particular, to costume design as her principal occupation in the theatre. She was responsible for making the costumes for Irving's production of *Robespierre* in 1899. In a letter written in November 1891, Ellen is obviously distressed about the lack of direction in Edy's undoubted talents; she was then twenty-two:

Edy walks in some of our plays and now and then has a line or so given her to speak, but although I *never* should be surprised if she did something great some day, either as a writer,

or an actress or a musician, the fact remains at present a hard fact that she does *nothing whatever* well.²⁴

There remained, therefore, less and less for Ellen to do at the Lyceum, where she continued to receive £200 a week, a salary which exceeded what many humble professional people received in a year. In her final ten years as a member of the Lyceum company, starting in 1893, her major appearances in London were confined to only four new productions: *King Arthur* (1895), *Cymbeline* (1896), *Madame Sans-Gêne* (1897; Queen Victoria's Jubilee year) and *Coriolanus* (1901, the year of the Queen's death). Neither of the Shakespearean productions, as we have seen, sustained long runs – *Coriolanus* ran only 34 and *Cymbeline* 72 performances. But occasional revivals of *The Merchant of Venice* kept Ellen's performance as Portia alive for the public of the 1890s.

King Arthur, written for Irving in prosaic verse by Joe Comyns-Carr (since Wills's own efforts on the subject had failed) gave Ellen certain opportunities as Guinevere. It opened in January 1895, with Irving, of course, as Arthur and Johnston Forbes-Robertson as Lancelot. Already old-fashioned in its presentation of a romantic triangle in a setting of pageant-like medievalism, this play was a field-day to Hawes Craven and his assistants in their realization on the stage of the pictorial vision of Burne-Jones, whom Irving commissioned as production designer. Arthur Sullivan, now at the height of his fame, composed and conducted the music. Both critics and public applauded the piece – all but one, the recently appointed critic of Frank Harris's *Saturday Review*, Bernard Shaw. Irving and his whole policy at the Lyceum were to become the pivot of Shaw's attack on the British theatre of the 1890s; Ellen, however, was the object of his adoration, an actress of genius to be wooed from Irving's Svengali-clutches.

While other critics, including the waspish Archer, remained loyal to Irving, Bernard Shaw had another and very different objective in the theatre. He wrote:

Irving's thirty years at the Lyceum, though a most imposing

épisode in the history of the English theatre, were an exasperating waste of the talent of the two artists who had seemed to me peculiarly fitted to lift the theatre out of its old ruts and head it towards unexplored regions of drama. With Lyceum Shakespear I had no patience. Shakespear, even in his integrity, could not satisfy the hungry minds whose spiritual and intellectual appetites had been whetted and even created by Ibsen. . . . Irving wasting his possibilities in costly Bardicide, was wasting Ellen Terry's as well.²⁵

Madame Sans-Gêne, which Irving produced largely for Ellen's benefit, gave her the opportunity to excite the London critics and playgoers into making comparisons between her performance and that of Réjane, who had played this historical piece in French in London and New York during 1895. Shaw thought it ludicrous to compare two actresses playing a part well below their strength; it was like, he said, comparing two athletes throwing the hammer two feet. What Ellen enjoyed was the chance to play the so-called vulgar comedy of the Parisian-Cockney washerwoman,²⁶ who is later translated into the grand lady; Irving in the part of a stage Napoleon subordinated his massive talents to suggesting rather than playing the Emperor. What he enjoyed was creating his make-up for the part, though he was far too tall, thin and ascetic for Napoleon.²⁷ As Ellen put it, it was as if she 'were watching Napoleon trying to imitate H.I.' Even the Prince of Wales told him it was not the part for him: 'Wellington perhaps – but not Napoleon,' he said. But the Emperor had always held a fascination for Irving, who had both a bust and a portrait of him in his library, as well as a collection of biographical studies. He even pondered for a long while, whether or not to produce Shaw's one-act play *The Man of Destiny*, which featured the youthful Napoleon. The relation between Shaw and Irving became so strained that no one, not even Ellen, would induce him to adopt a play written by so ferocious a critic.

Although Ellen was out of sorts during rehearsal, she was satisfied with the opening night; as she said, she 'acted courage-

ously and fairly well', and the result was a modest success for her, if not for Irving. An attempt was made to keep Shaw out of the theatre on the grounds that it was by now notorious that he only came to see Miss Terry. The play grew in popularity with the public – the rival attraction at the time being the Jubilee celebrations themselves – and *Madame Sans-Gêne* became the principal piece put on during Irving's provincial tour in the autumn of 1897. But by now, as we shall see, the personal bonds between Irving and Ellen were slackening, and it was during the summer of this year that Irving began his close friendship with Mrs Eliza Aria which came to mean so much to him during his last years.

But, in spite of his many reverses, Irving during the 1890s was still the acknowledged leader of his profession. He was knighted in 1895, during the run of *King Arthur*, and since 1889 had given with Ellen two Royal Command performances at Sandringham and Windsor.²⁸ No management rivalled his own, though Beerbohm Tree, some fifteen years younger, started his celebrated management at his new theatre, Her Majesty's, in 1897, the year of the Jubilee. This was the year before Irving's financial position became so insecure at the Lyceum that he was forced to allow the theatre to be taken over by a syndicate made up of Joe Comyns-Carr and his brothers, who launched a public company in 1899 for this purpose. Irving, who was ill at the time, did this against the urgent advice of Stoker. Ellen's position changed as a result; she became once more a member of a touring company which no longer controlled its own theatre in London, and this contributed to the final dissolution of her full-time partnership with Irving.

This melancholy decline in Irving's fortunes, if not in his actual reputation with the public, was due to a series of reverses. As we have seen, the mounting costs of his productions were by no means always met by the box-office returns, and as early as 1891 he was forced to bolster falling receipts by abandoning new plays in favour of including revivals of the old favourites in the repertoire. As the public response to the seasons at the Lyceum fluctuated, he undertook long and wearying provincial tours to make the money necessary to mount new plays in London.²⁹ His health,

and that of Ellen, suffered from these prolonged absences from home during the winter months, which had to be spent in the indifferent comforts of hotels. During December 1896 when he was playing *Richard III* (and Ellen, who was ill, was convalescing in Germany), he slipped and suffered an injury to his knee, which forced Stoker temporarily to close the theatre. Even when Ellen returned and appeared in a revival of *Olivia*, Irving's two-month absence from the stage led to a serious decline in the Lyceum's fortunes. In 1898, not only did two plays fail (*Peter the Great* by his son Laurence, and *The Medicine Man* achieved a total of only 62 performances), but he also suffered the almost overwhelming disaster of losing some £30,000-worth of sets and properties when his scene store in Southwark was gutted by fire during the small hours on 18 February. The contents of this store, representing all the magnificence of forty-four productions, were reduced to ashes, and the sum due from their insurance was only £6,000. Now sixty, Irving had relied on the productions, for which these settings were the framework, to support him during his final years. Now he was left with nothing but the sets for the productions currently in the repertoire at the theatre; he still retained the means of staging *Louis XI*, *The Bells*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Madame Sans-Gêne*. The 1898 season saw a loss of a further £6,000. During the provincial tour that followed in the winter he contracted pneumonia and pleurisy. It was in these adverse circumstances that Comyns-Carr made the proposals which led to the formation of the Lyceum syndicate. It is true, however, that substantial profits were made during the American tours of 1893-4, 1895-6, 1899-1900 and 1901-1902. In fact, without these lengthy tours, it seems unlikely that Irving could have stayed in business on his own during the later 1890s.³⁰

Irving finally lost the Lyceum as his London centre in 1902. When he returned from his tour in that year, he was faced not only with the fact that the company formed for his benefit was bankrupt, but also the news that the structure of the Lyceum had been condemned by the London County Council as unsafe. It was threatened with closure at the end of the 1902 season unless

some £30,000 could be found to renovate it and meet the fire-precaution requirements of the local authorities. Ellen, anxious to be fair in this time of difficulty, wrote on 18 May to Bram Stoker:

1. The present season for *me* please begins when I *begin to act*, on the 7th June and not on the 31st May. (I don't want salary when I don't give services! Many thanks all the same.)

2. I will join Sir Henry on the twelve weeks tour (beginning in Birmingham 22nd September) acting two or six times a week (as Sir Henry may desire) at half my usual touring salary – that is to say at £100 per week.

3. I cannot decide at present about the further ahead tour (January 1903). What you call my '*own repertoire parts*' seem to have dwindled down to 2. Portia and Henrietta Maria – haven't they, unless we played *Macbeth*, *Much Ado*, *The Cup*, or a few things of the kind. However, there is no particular hurry about 1903 and I shall see H.I. soon. Yes thanks, I'm having a good rest, but oh . . . the cold.³¹

Just before the closure of the Lyceum, Irving gave his last grand reception on the stage to the distinguished visitors from the territories of the Empire who thronged London to attend the Coronation of Edward VII on 26 June, an event which had to be postponed owing to the King's illness. On 3 July, Irving played both *A Story of Waterloo* (another *tour de force* performance, this time an aged war veteran), and *The Bells*, and then opened the stage for one of his transformation-scene banquets. Rajahs, sultans, rances, resplendent in their national dress filled the stage together with Irving's friends from the theatrical, artistic and social world. Two weeks later, the theatre was closed, and Ellen and he were faced with another of the wearisome, if money-making provincial tours. They played together for the last time under his management in *The Merchant of Venice* at the Prince's Theatre Bristol on 13 December 1902. Their last appearance together on any stage was also as Portia and Shylock on 14 July 1903 at Drury Lane for the benefit of the Actors' Association.

They had appeared together in twenty-seven plays during a partnership which had lasted unbroken for nearly a quarter of a century. After the fire of 1898, the number of productions in which, at their age, they could effectively appear had dwindled to three: *Charles I*, *Madame Sans-Gêne* and *The Merchant of Venice*.³² Of these only *The Merchant of Venice* enjoyed an unabated success; it had lasted them over twenty years. It alone survived from their lost youth, while the settings for the triumphs that had been *Hamlet*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Macbeth* and the spectacles of *King Arthur*, of *Becket*, *Faust* and *Henry VIII* had been devoured by the flames.

So ended the greatest association of actor and actress in the history of the English theatre. It ended naturally and without acrimony. If there was any feeling at all on Ellen's side it was her consciousness that Irving, whom she still loved, had ceased to regard her as a 'useful' actress, and, in his sorrow and old age, had sought companionship with another. But she was still live and strong. There was a world elsewhere.

VIII

QUEEN OF EVERY WOMAN

In bringing up her children, Ellen was always conscious that they had no father in the house, and that therefore she should try to become both father and mother to them, and especially to Teddy. She was also very conscious that, as she had received no formal education in her childhood, her children should be as well 'educated' as possible, whether they liked it or not. During the 1880s Edy, who was twelve in December 1881 and Teddy, who was ten in January 1882, were sent to a private school in Earls Court run by a Mrs Cole, who had a reputation for holding advanced ideas; she favoured co-education and the 'new' woman, which meant, among other things, that girls had the right to as good an education as boys, an unusual outlook even in the late Victorian period. Among the other children at this school were three young members of Walter Sickert's family – Sickert was one of Godwin's friends. In 1883, when Ellen first went to America, Edy became a boarder at the school, while Teddy was sent on to a school in Tunbridge Wells. He sent pathetic letters back; 'poor kid' scribbled Ellen on one of them, initialling this E.T., but soon he was writing saying the school, after all, was 'rare jolly'. He was still there at the moment when, in a fit of loneliness around Christmas 1884, Ellen cabled Dr Stephen Coleridge, his guardian (who looked, he thought, 'like a moral but rather sick young vulture'), to bring one of the children over to her. So his education was interrupted and, as we have seen, within two days of his thirteenth birthday he found himself appearing on the stage in Chicago in Irving's *Eugene Aram*.

Teddy was already entranced by the theatre, and seems to have shared some of his mother's privilege in enjoying the freedom of

the Lyceum. Irving, separated from his own sons, became a guiding figure in the life of Teddy, who both loved him and held him in a kind of reverence. Teddy was very conscious of having no recognized father, for he says the women in the house were at pains to keep the name of Godwin from him: 'Never a word from them of my father,' he records. 'Not having mine, not hearing of mine, this grave sensation of *something being wrong* grew and grew into a fixed sort of small terror with me.' But at the Lyceum all was well; as he grew a little older he went to the theatre regularly with his mother, seeing the plays and meeting the players behind the scenes. He was 'Miss Terry's boy'; he remembers on the first night of *Much Ado about Nothing* in 1882 sitting in the stage box and seeing his mother sweeping towards him in the dance which brought down the rapturous final curtain. He went to the matinées at other theatres sometimes with Ellen at his side. He was ready for the theatre, and was later to complain that he was not, like his mother, brought up inside it as his particular form of education. But in 1885 he was allowed to stay with the company in America, his schooldays almost forgotten in the delight of acting in the plays.

However, once back in England, there was another school to be faced, a public school, Bradfield College, while Edy was sent to a private school in Gloucestershire. Here he stayed until the summer of 1887, when Ellen sent him to study German at a small college in Heidelberg run by a German and two Englishmen. Edy was also sent to Germany to complete her education. Later, in 1888, she studied music under Hollander in Berlin, but she was prevented from fulfilling her early promise as a pianist because she developed rheumatism in her hands. Ellen, the inveterate letter-writer, wrote to her in 1887, urging her, like Teddy, to work at her German – 'work at your German, and *speak* it'. Edy above all things wanted to go with Ellen to America, as Teddy had been fortunate enough to do. 'I shall not be able to gratify this wish of your heart, which is for your own pleasure, if you don't gratify the wish of *my* heart (which is for your own benefit) and make use of the present time, and work.' Ellen was being mother

with a vengeance. 'By the way, I've asked the doctors, and you must on no account drink beer, even of the *smallest* kind! claret, or any wine of the country, but no beer. (A glass once a moon would not hurt just to *feel German!*). . . . Oh, you bad girl writing that letter to the German actor. . . . I would be vexed if some fool or other thought you vulgar.'¹

A letter written on 9 January 1890, when Edy was twenty, to the 'dear friends' who had charge of her daughter at this time reveals something of the nature of her concern for Edy's welfare: 'I am pleased to hear Edy is improving in her music and vexed – *angry* – to hear she does not take her physic. That she *must* do. . . . I have written to Edy and told her, that as she has spent all her money she must now do *without*, until Feb! . . . I gave her much more money this last quarter, and just as she was going away Mr Irving gave her ten pounds, so do NOT give her any more – but please just pay her *Trams* for her, and that is all.'²

There can be no doubt that one side at least of Ellen's nature craved the comforts of respectability. According to her son, if Ellen had a fault it was her 'inability to take a side and stick to it. She was all for Peace – and so would try to pacify two opposed people and ideas'. If pressure were put upon her, she tended to yield to it, and the pressure now was for ease, respectability, acceptance, the luxury of her high success. Up to this time, the children had born the name of Wardell, but events had taken place which guided Ellen to give them entirely new names. During the tour in September 1883, Ellen with Irving, Teddy and Bram Stoker, had after a Saturday night performance in Glasgow travelled to Greenock, and they had then been rowed across the water in the middle of a storm to reach Sir William Pearce's luxurious yacht. It was from this yacht next day that Ellen had been shown the rock called Ailsa Craig, and hearing the words pronounced, she had exclaimed what magnificent names they would make for any actress. So, in 1887, the children were formally christened and confirmed; Edy became Edith Geraldene Ailsa Craig; Ailsa became the name she used when she appeared upon the stage. Teddy became Edward Henry Gordon Craig; Henry was in

tribute to Irving, who was godfather to both children, and Gordon derived from Lady Gordon, Ellen's friend, who became Teddy's godmother. Edy's confirmation took place in Exeter Cathedral on 11 January 1887 at a private ceremony performed by the Bishop of Exeter. 'Strange,' wrote Ellen in her diary, 'over thirty years ago Father and Mother (with Kate and me) *walked* (necessity!) from Bristol to Exeter, and now my child is given half an hour's private talk with the Bishop before her confirmation. Praise God from whom *all* blessings flow.'³ But Ellen, who, later at least, always kept a Bible by her bedside and accepted the need for christening and confirmation, was never to become a churchgoer.

On 17 April 1885 Charles Kelly had died at the age of forty-six, leaving Ellen as a widow of thirty-nine. That Ellen felt some kind of debt to this husband whom she had taken to suit her convenience is born out by the fact that she paid all the debts he left, and for some years supported his first wife's sisters. She was in fact brought to his bedside by the girl with whom he was then living, but even at this solemn moment she could not help feeling she was playing Juliet. Charles Reade, the man whom she had once considered like a second father, also died in the spring. Then, the following year, news reached her that Godwin had died at the age of fifty-three on 6 October 1886; the only mourners at his funeral at Norleigh in Oxfordshire were Whistler, Lady Archibald Campbell, and Beatrice, his widow, who was later to marry Whistler.⁴ Whistler was also one of Ellen's friends. Ellen, in her *Memoirs*, lifts the curtain momentarily when she speaks of Whistler being with 'the dearest of [her] friends, Edward Godwin, when he died'. On 27 November she wrote to a friend, commenting on the irony of Godwin's death coming as it did only a few weeks before Watts's remarriage:

The last two months have been very cruel to me, full of disaster – and I seem to be fighting for power to *use* my life, not to enjoy it. People have a way of dying which makes 'all the difference' to some others – 'to me' – I sometimes sit down and just wonder what it all means – this life of ours – Yes, it

was strange poor Signor marrying – *now* – he should have done so 20 years ago.⁵

With the death of Wardell, Ellen was independent once again, but her position was very different from what it had been when she had hastened into marriage less than ten years before. She was now eminent in her profession, and her future was as assured as ever it could possibly be in the theatre. Irving, regarded as the greatest actor of the age, was her devoted companion, and her two children, growing up now, were showing every sign that they would soon join her in the theatre. She was loved, admired and courted by the most distinguished people of her time, and she had become as well known and well liked in North America as she was in her own country. Her life was incessantly preoccupied with the theatre, where she was often kept from morning until the small hours of the night, for after the evening performance was over Henry would frequently expect her to act as hostess at the elaborate supper-parties held in the Lyceum Beefsteak Room.

These suppers, together with his constant visits to the Garrick Club, became the core of Irving's more public social life. For twenty years the Beefsteak Room was where he relaxed, as well as a private place for far more formal entertainment. Here he would discuss things with Bram Stoker and Harry Loveday, with his collaborators and fellow artists, with his friends and with the theatre-loving nobility, with financiers and politicians, with great actors and actresses from other countries during their visits to his theatre. Large receptions, as we have seen, were given upon the stage, and it was here that the Prince of Wales and a party of fifty were received on 7 May 1886. Ellen's own memories of the Beefsteak Room (which could seat over thirty people) included receiving, with Irving, the Princess May of Teck (later Queen Mary) and her mother, Lord Randolph Churchill and his 'beautiful wife' (who on one occasion wore a dress embroidered with green beetles' wings – the origin of the idea for Lady Macbeth's robe), the singers Patti and Melba, the players Coquelin,

Bernhardt, Salvini, Booth and Duse. Many became their friends, whom they met again in London and elsewhere. Once, standing behind the scenes at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, Ellen watched Patti sing:

My impression from that point of view was that she was actually a *bird*! She could not help singing! Her head, flattened on top, her nose tilted downwards like a lovely little beak, her throat swelling and swelling as it poured out that extraordinary volume of sound, all made me think that she must have been a nightingale before she was a human being!⁶

Melba became a close friend, whom she was eventually to visit in Australia.

In Stoker's description, guests to the Beefsteak Room included 'statesmen, travellers, explorers, ambassadors, foreign princes and potentates, poets, novelists, historians – writers of every style, shade and quality. Representatives of all the learned professions: of all the official worlds: of all the great industries. Sportsmen, landlords, agriculturalists. Men and women of leisure and fashion. Scientists, thinkers, inventors, philanthropists, divines'. When Stoker tried to draw up a list of everyone who rightfully should be asked to a garden party late in the 1880s, his list exceeded 5,000 and the project was abandoned. But in his book he lists more than 1,000 names of eminent or notable people who enjoyed Irving's hospitality at the Lyceum. To read the list of Irving's guests is like scanning the name-index to a social history of the nineteenth century. Irving's smaller parties were often limited to men, and Ellen by no means attended every social reception he gave. But she alone could act as his hostess, and her position at the Lyceum gave her the right of introduction to anyone she cared to meet from this great cross-section of Victorian culture and society. This more convivial aspect of Henry Irving was that depicted in the famous portrait by Bastien-Lepage in the National Portrait Gallery, and in Sir Bernard Partridge's many drawings.

Alice Comyns-Carr gives an amusing account of a Beefsteak supper party after Sarah Bernhardt had been present at a dress

rehearsal for *Henry VIII*. Bernhardt had been invited to comment on Alice's costumes for Katherine of Aragon:

The two had a heated discussion over the gown which Queen Catherine was to wear in the trial scene. It was of rich metal cloth, and had a front panel of very heavy embroidery in fleur-de-lis design.

Nell and I had already had a controversy over this dress, she complaining bitterly that it was far too heavy to wear, and now she tried to enlist Sarah's sympathies.

'I've told Alice how uncomfortable it is,' she explained; 'just like a tea-tray on my stomach – one of our grandmother's, you know, inlaid with mother-of-pearl.' But although Sarah laughed heartily at Nell's mournful voice, she stood by me. 'Ah, but it is just what it should be. The Tudor touch. So you must not think of your stomach.' Over the supper-table in the Beefsteak Room that night talk turned on age, and the effect it had upon acting. Irving remarked sadly that old age must come to us all, but Sarah, leaning over the table to Nell, said, 'My darling, there are two people who shall never be old – you and I.'

It was from the preoccupation of such a life that Ellen turned towards her home and friends for simpler pleasures. Her personal friends were many, among them Graham Robertson, Alice Comyns-Carr, Sir Albert Seymour, Tom Heslewood and Stephen Coleridge, the 'tight-lipped piece of leather' whom Teddy, now Gordon Craig, later accused of incompetence as an adviser on the placing of his mother's investments. It was Ellen who had first introduced Graham Robertson to the Beefsteak Room in a party which included the Bancrofts. He 'remembered the picture of that first supper at the Lyceum – the bright, candle-lit table among the shadows of the old Beefsteak Room – the beautiful, ivory face of the host against the dark panelling . . . that pale face, which seemed to absorb and give out light'. He remembered also that the room was hot and stuffy, and that Ellen insisted on opening the window to let in the fresh air. Ellen, naturally, was

in constant demand with hostesses in London. It was at a dance in the winter of 1887 that Graham Robertson first met her:

I was at a dance, and I remember that it was a dull dance, and I was making preparations to leave it when there was a sudden stir at the door – something was happening – something in the nature of a sunrise.

At the entry stood a golden figure which seemed actually to diffuse light, the golden figure which I had first beheld in the palace of Belmont. A fairer vision than Ellen Terry, then at the zenith of her loveliness, cannot be imagined: she shone with no shallow sparkle or glitter, but with a steady radiance that filled the room and had the peculiar quality of making everybody else invisible. From after experience I feel sure that she was in the act of whispering to her hostess, 'Now don't you bother about me and I'll just slip in without being noticed and sit down somewhere' – a feat which might have been performed with equal ease by the sun at noonday.⁸

Ellen went rarely to these occasions, preferring more intimate social gatherings. But she was always ready to accompany Irving on any of the more important public engagements that he undertook.

Ellen never lost touch with the countryside, even returning now and then with Teddy to Harpenden by pony trap to see the house that had once been hers and Godwin's. In January 1889 she moved her London house to 22 Barkston Gardens, Earls Court, but she always enjoyed owning a succession of properties in the country. After Rose Cottage, the next was the Audrey Arms, a little public house on the outskirts of Uxbridge; it stood in a row of cottages next door to a second inn, and she was obliged by her lease to keep the bar open. However, she served such poor quality beer that she rapidly drove the local custom from her doors. Graham Robertson, who stayed there with her, remembers serving only a single customer appearing throughout his visit. In 1893, Teddy took over the Audrey Arms at a rent of five shilling a week, and Ellen had a little cottage in Kingston Vales. Later again, in 1896,

Ellen acquired from the Comyns-Carrs their Tower Cottage in Winchelsea ('a house built on to the ivied wall of the ancient Town Gate,' says Graham Robertson), and then finally, in 1900, she bought the fifteenth-century farmhouse of Smallhythe, near Tenterden in Kent, which she owned until her death, and which is now a National Trust property and a permanent museum dedicated to her memory.

In these various cottages, and at her home in Barkston Gardens, where she stayed until 1902, she loved to entertain her close friends in the most informal style. Here life was lived freely and naturally. Before buying Tower Cottage from the Comyns-Carrs, Ellen had rented the house next door. She loved, says Alice, 'going out in the early morning and dancing on the lawn in front of the house with bare feet, and clad only in the flimsiest of long white night-dresses'. When Joe became concerned as to what the neighbours might think, Ellen's reply was that they were still in bed and therefore only farm labourers might see her. 'I don't mind amusing them,' said Ellen. 'It's so good for the poor dears.' Irving would come for weekends with her, and, says Alice, 'we often caught glimpses of him in rather queer get-ups as he sat taking his case in Nell's garden'.

To all her friends and helpers, Ellen poured out her letters in profusion. She had only to think of someone to start writing. Her bold and joyful handwriting filled page after page of notepaper. How many hundreds or even thousands of these letters now survive it is difficult to assess, but there are many in private hands as well as in public collections. Most of them are the small change of daily arrangements – visiting her friends, sending them theatre seats, giving instructions to her dressmaker, giving help or offering advice, settling her domestic affairs. All are characterized by her immediate spontaneity of expression.

Among the surviving letters which form a delightful running commentary are those sent to Mrs Nettleship about the costumes she needed both on and off-stage.⁹ 'As I *think* of things I'll write them to you,' she says, expressing her whole approach to letter-writing when sending instructions on 10 November 1892 about

the costumes for *King Lear*. 'No wimples for anyone,' she adds. Here are remarks from other letters to Mrs Nettleship, the first concerning the dresses for *Charles I*:

March 4 1891 – By the way the *yellow* dress must not be *too* correct remind Mrs Carr *about the length* – it *must* be too long behind for Grace must not be left out for all the archaeology in the world – the *breadth* of the dress is great, and so it must be kept LONG – especially as I hold it over my arm a good deal

July 12 1892 – I hear you are making a new Cardinal's dress for Mr Irving. Have you still some left to make one more cape? If so please send me enough silk for one to No 22. I will suffer the wrath of Mr Irving.

July 15 1895 – Was at rehearsal till past 3 on Sat evening – Am half dead . . . I want a Cheap Cloak for Wednesday, looking like Ermine, but *really* the innocent Bunny-rabbit.

In the latter years, constant reference to her declining health, and Irving's, occur in many of her letters. She began to suffer from Irving's driving concentration on prolonged rehearsals. She writes to Mrs Nettleship:

June 16 1900 – a little better last eve but oh, I am so tired.

April 15 1901 – Am far too ill to be up . . . MUST REHEARSE.

June 24 1901 – Mr Irving is frightfully hoarse tonight – I am in consternation! – He is slaving away however.

Letters (mostly undated or only partially so) written from the 1880s to the early 1900s and addressed to another woman friend, Mrs Bertha Jennings Bramly, give a further running commentary on her life during this period.¹⁰ They can all be dated approximately through internal evidence:

23 July 1884 – . . . an apology for loss of voice is given for me each night in front of Curtain at the Lyceum. Edie and Ted will be home then too – their holidays – *that always* makes me well.

[c. Dec 1885] – Dear old Bertha – did you ever feel so

crushed (that's exactly the expression) – I'm not fooling – so crushed out of all individuality that people and all things, seemed unreal, and that it was just impossible to reason or to do reasonable things – oh! how dreadful a time I've passed through – In truth I've been brave in the long-while-ago – through heavy sorrow and trial, and now that theres nothing to bear with, now that the Sun does shine for me, I am in the tight merciless grip of *Melancholy* for the first time in a very long life – Ah! but the terrible time has *past*, only now you will understand me when I tell you I *couldn't* write letters – *couldn't* see people *COULD not* do 'those things which I ought to have done.'

[June 1886] – . . . my *cussed health*!! Last Tuesday and Wednesday I was so weak and worn out that Mr Irving let me off tonight's work and I slipped away down here alone with my maid!

20 June [1890] – This little tour of a month round the Provinces reading *Macbeth* *ought* to have been most enjoyable – for it was quite marvellous to see the great halls full of people, crowds of working people too, some quite rough and to note how they hung on to the words, and how enthusiastic they all were.¹¹

[1897] – Rehearsing every day and every evening 3 plays too. I'm nearly crazy sometimes from just *thinking* = As for my body —!!!¹²

[c. Dec. 1898] So many people who have seen me on the stage, or have passed me in the street *say* they know me quite well, quite marvellous creatures on this earth crawling about, that I can scarcely conceive – One has just written me a letter (no name) signing *herself* 'an American gentleman' telling me I am far too old and fat to be acting, & that no one wants to see me any more on the stage, & warning me not to go to America or I shall be shot! – *I am fat* – & old? (–er than I was yesterday) but surely neither of these are good reasons for

shooting me! On Thursday I had *such* a birthday telegrams – letters – verses – gifts & flowers everywhere Flowers – Bowers – & I was so excited, tho' I *am* so old!

Poor H-I has had the 'fluze' *badly* & has gone to Bournemouth to get stronger – Meanwhile Mr Tyars (!) has 'obliged' – Tell Amy I **COULD NOT** lie at his feet =

God be with you dearest Bertha

Your old & fat

Nell¹³

[c. 1900] You may chance to have a spare hour some evening to throw away upon me at the Lyceum. If so *do come*. If you only knew it I have more leasure there than in all my days!!

[Perhaps Oct 1901] This has been a very difficult year for me – always breaking down in my work.

Writing from Tower Cottage Winchelsea, after one of the last of her provincial tours with Irving, she writes in relief from the Kentish countryside: 'All is peaceful once more in Win'sea. I am nearly always alone.' Letters written to friends during this period are full of reference to her declining health. On 23 June 1889 she writes to Mrs Amy Dickens,¹⁴ 'This is the *first season I've not broken down*. . . . With heavy Lady Macbeth every night – yet it's *because* of Lady Mac, I'm alright!! . . . Suffer a great deal with my eyes lately.' Again she turned to the countryside for rest, writing to Amy from the Audrey Arms in Uxbridge on 29 November (no year stated, but presumably in the early 1890s): 'My dear old thing, I am down here nearly always now, for the town is so dreary and so noisy and dull – there are lovely bright sunny hours here in the morning which better fit me for my evening's work.' Apart from her health, she suffered most when Irving himself was away from the theatre. To Enid Dickens, daughter of Amy, she wrote on 23 October 1898:

Sir Henry has been most frightfully ill, and I've been in despair at the distance between us – I have however heard news at least threc times a day. . . . I was terribly frightened a

week ago. . . . It will be a long time before he will be strong, I fear. Oh, it is sad, sad, sad.

In another undated letter to Enid, probably concerning the birthday presents she is receiving in February 1889:

Thanks my dear little Enid for your pretty present – Mr Irving's was the first, yours the second, and then they came pouring in! – Heaps of pretty gifts, from pretty friends – and I got quite excited – though I *am* getting old . . . You can imagine I feel dull at the theatre now King Arthur is away – oh, it has been a trial!! – but he comes back on Saturday.

Another of her friends was Oscar Wilde. He was her junior by seven years, and had left Oxford to live in London in the same year that she had gone to the Lyccum. She had, as we have seen, been touched by Wilde's sonnets – by far the best verse among so much doggerel written in her honour – and Wilde had been invited to one of the grand receptions given on the Lyccum stage. 'The most remarkable men I have known were Whistler and Oscar Wilde. This does not imply that I like them better or admired them more than others, but there was something about both of them more instantaneously individual and audacious than it is possible to describe.' Oscar Wilde and Lillie Langtry had taken the trouble to go to Liverpool to see Ellen and Irving off on their first American voyage; by then Wilde had begun to curl his hair, Ellen noticed, in the style of the Prince Regent, but she thought 'his brown eyes very beautiful'. Like other guests of Wilde, she and Irving had scrawled their signatures on the white panelling of his rooms overlooking the river at 13 Salisbury Street. Wilde was to become the friend of many famous actresses of the day, amongst them Mrs Langtry, Mary Anderson, and, above all, Sarah Bernhardt. After Wilde had married Constance, Ellen and Irving were at times guests at Wilde's house in Tite Street. Unlike Sarah Bernhardt, it was Ellen who was prepared to show sympathy when Wilde was in his deepest trouble in 1895; it would seem that one day between the trials a veiled lady

drove up in a cab and left a horseshoe with a bouquet of violets and a card with the words 'For luck' written on it. It seems, though it cannot be proved, that this veiled lady was Ellen, and that she had meant to rouse him by this small gesture as much as to offer him sympathy and encouragement. She also went out of her way to praise him when even to mention his name in normal society was to risk the severest disapprobation. Irving, too, expressed sympathy for Wilde.¹⁵

An undated letter from Oscar Wilde to Ellen is preserved at Smallhythe.¹⁶ It was sent from Titic Street:

Dear Ellen,

Your love is more wonderful even than a crystal caught in bent reeds of gold, and I don't envy Constance any more, for I will wear the love, and no one shall see it. As for the box – it will be the sweetest of pleasures to be the guests of the Goddess – and oh! dear Ellen, look sometimes in our direction, and let us come and pay due homage afterwards to the gracious lady and the great artist we adore.

Always yours,

Oscar.

Apart from the correspondence with Bernard Shaw, only one other volume of her letters has been published. This rare book, *The Heart of Ellen Terry*, appeared soon after her death in 1928 and was compiled anonymously by Stephen Coleridge, who merely called himself 'an intimate friend for half a century', to whom she had written continuously throughout the period of their friendship. 'She was my friend from my early youth until we both became old and had seen our children's children.' Some of these letters to Stephen Coleridge have already been quoted, but here are others which reveal her in the variety of her moods:

Undated, but written sometime in 1881 or 1882:

Never being able to thank you enough for your very constant care for us all, it seems to me I take refuge in silence and never never express any gratitude at all!!

Oh! dear, Dear, I don't feel as bad as I seem.

Dear Henry is ever the same 'gentle and he's *kind* you'll never never *find* a better dog than poor dog Tray' (Robson's old song).

He'd send his love to you if he knew I was writing but he doesn't, so I send it for him with mine.

The chicks are '*really* having jolly holidays' they say, they and I (and sometimes Booeey) go out driving or walking together, and read to them and they to me – in fact we have a rare old time together.

Here's a lot about self. Forgive and love me.

Nell.

Written on 15 February 1892, after he had told her he was to visit Watts, whose friend he was:

You tell me you are going to stay awhile with Mr Watts. The dews of Heaven fall thick in blessings on him.

Where? Not at L.H.H.! At Freshwater perhaps? or – where? *Let me know for I like to picture things.*

(L.H.H. stands for Little Holland House.)

After attending Tennyson's funeral in Westminster Abbey:

The great coffin moving up the centre of the abbey yesterday wrapped in the flag was a harrowing scene. I sat next a sympathetic soul – Mrs Ritchie – and was glad of her. I should have *had* to touch *somebody* and a stranger might have been affronted! I wish you had been with me.

Throughout her career, she was always responding, often unthinkingly, to demands upon her generosity. Having experienced want and debt herself, she could not bear the thought of it for others, with results that were sometimes unfortunate. An early letter to Bertha Bramly dated 3 May and written probably in 1879, shows how she was deluged with appeals: 'This morning's post *alone* brings me *14 appeals for help!* All trouble – and mostly all from *gentle* folk. At times – now – I *can't* study for thinking of the misery.'

On one occasion, her notorious lateness in the theatre was due to an act of generosity. The story is Alice Comyns-Carr's, as she waited one night with Sally Holland, Ellen's dresser, in mounting fear that Irving would discover how late Ellen was:

They always had adjoining dressing-rooms, and most evenings Nell's maid Sally and I waited with quaking hearts for her to arrive at the theatre, knowing that any moment Henry might open the communicating door to see if she were ready. One night at the Lyceum it was only a few minutes before the curtain was due to go up, and still Nell hadn't arrived.

'Miss Terry dressed?' inquired Irving, as he put his head in at the door.

'She ain't come yet, Govenor,' murmured Sally tremblingly.

'Pity,' was Henry's only reply, and it was then I realized how much he cared about Nell, for restraint was never Irving's long suit. At the very last moment she rushed in, cheeks aglow and humming a tune in the way she had when she thought she might be to blame.

'That you, Henry?' she remarked demurely as Irving, watch in hand, came in just as Nell had settled down to 'make up' her face. 'I've been down to the Minories to see a fellow who sent me a begging letter this morning. I just wanted to make sure that it was genuine.'

'The Minories!' grunted Henry. 'A nice place for you at night. I suppose you didn't think of what would happen to the play if you had been attacked by some roughs down there?' But Nell only laughed. 'Why, every man Jack in the crowd knew me or had heard tell. I let down the window of the four-wheeler and shook hands with them all. It's because there were so many that I'm so late.'

'Of course,' Henry muttered laconically, 'it's a good advertisement, but I do wish you wouldn't cut things so fine.'

'Not two minutes to your entrance, Miss Terry,' yelled the call-boy wildly from the passage outside.

'If anybody bothers me I shan't come at all,' Nell replied mildly.

Charlie, the call-boy, was silent, and Sally continued feverishly slipping garments over her mistress's head and fastening them up behind while Nell worked busily with her blacking pencil and hare's foot. From Charlie's movements outside we knew that he was leaning over, listening to the stage.

'Two lines to your speech, Miss Terry, if you please.' Nell tore down the narrow staircase, with Sally rushing behind to save her skirts from some irreparable rent. 'The worst "tear-girl" ever I knowed,' said she, on coming back to the dressing-room, as she sank exhausted into a seat.¹⁷

Most of Ellen's generosity was more concealed than this sudden visit to the Minorics. She was always giving money away, usually in secret.¹⁸

She was always willing to give help, especially to young people. Lewis Carroll was in the habit of approaching her on behalf of stage-struck girls whom he had known as children and who now prevailed on him to get them introductions to the great actress. He was, however, cautious, as a good Victorian should be, and a letter survives written to warn the mother of Dorothea Baird, who was later to marry Irving's son Harry, about the unusual background to Ellen's life. Dorothea, or Dolly as she was called, was a keen amateur actress, who had appeared as Iris in *The Tempest* when it was produced by the Oxford University Dramatic Society in 1893. Lewis Carroll wrote in the following terms to Mrs Baird from Christ Church Oxford on 12 April, 1894:

Dear Mrs Baird,

There are two questions that I want to put before you for consideration.

The first is as to that friend of mine to whom Dolly wishes to be introduced. I have now introduced to her four of the daughters of my friends of ages between 18 and 25; but in every case, *before* doing so, I told the mother the history of my friend and asked her whether, now she knew all the

circumstances, she still wished her daughter to be introduced. In each case the answer was 'Yes' – so now, before giving any more promises to introduce Dolly, I would like to know what *you* think about it.

If you already know what is popularly said against my friend (which is usually a good deal more than the truth) and if, knowing it, you still wish Dolly to be introduced, I am quite satisfied and no more need be said.

If you do not know of any such tales, current in society, then I think I had better come and tell you the true history (you yourself, I mean; I had rather not talk about the matter to your daughter) and then you can settle what you wish to be done.

The other question is, may Dolly come and dine with me? I ask this, not knowing your views as to 'Mrs Grundy'. And you may be sure I shall not feel in the least hurt if you think it best to say 'No'. It is only in these last two or three years that I have ventured on such unique and unconventional parties – Winifred Stevens was my first guest.

Believe me sincerely yours,
C. L. Dodgson.

Rather than calling on Mrs Baird, he decided to write down his account of Ellen's background as he saw it:

When she was scarcely more than a child (17, I think), a man nearly three times her age professed to be in love with her. The match was pushed on by well-meaning friends who thought it was a grand thing for her. From the first, I don't think she had a fair chance of learning her new duties. Instead of giving her a home of her own he went on living as a guest with an elderly couple and the old lady was constantly exasperating the poor child by treating her as if she were still in the school-room and she, just like a child, used to go into fits of furious passion.

Quarrels began at once and very soon a separation was agreed on. He cynically told his friends that he found he had

never *loved* her; it had only been a passing fancy. He agreed to make her an annual allowance so long as she lived respectably.

This she did for a while, then she rebelled and accepted the offered love (of course without ceremonial of marriage) of another man.

I honestly believe her position was, from her point of view, this: 'I was tied by *human* law to a man who disowns his share of what ought to be a *mutual* contract. He never loved me and I do not believe, in God's sight, we are man and wife. Society expects me to live, till this man's death, as if I were single and to give up all hope of that form of love for which I pine and shall never get from *him*. This other man loves me as truly and faithfully as any lawful husband. If the marriage ceremony were *possible* I would insist on it before living with him. It is *not* possible and I will do without it.'

I allow freely that she was headstrong and wild in doing so; and her only real *duty* was to accept the wreck of her happiness and live (or if necessary die) *without* the love of a man. But I do not allow that her case resembled *at all* that of those poor women who, without any pretence of *love*, sell themselves to the first comer. It much more resembles the case of those many women who are living as faithfully and devotedly as lawful wives without having gone through any ceremony and who *are*, I believe, married in God's sight though not in Man's.

A lady (wife of a clergyman) to whom (before I would introduce her daughter to my friend) I told this story said, 'She has broken the law of man; she has *not* broken the law of God.'

She lived with this man for some years and he *is* the father of her son and daughter. Then came the result she must have known was *possible* if not probable and which perhaps her mad conduct deserved; the man deserted her and went abroad. When her lawful husband found out what she had done, of course he sued for and got a divorce. Then of course she was, in the eye of the law, free to be legally married and if only the other man had been as true as she, I have no doubt, meant to

be to him, they would have married and it would have gradually been forgotten that the children were born before the ceremony.

All this time I held no communication with her. I felt that she had so entirely sacrificed her social position that I had no desire but to drop the acquaintance. Then an actor offered her marriage and they were married. It was a most generous act, I think, to marry a woman with such a history and a *great* addition to this generosity was his allowing the children to assume *his* surname.

The actor's father, a clergyman, so entirely approved of his son's conduct that he came from the North of England to perform the ceremony. This second marriage put her, in the eyes of Society, once more in the position of a respectable woman. And then I asked her mother to ask her if she would like our friendship to begin again and she said 'yes'. And I went and called on her and her husband.

It really looked as if the misery of her life was *over*. But another misery came on of quite another kind. The man *drank*. She knew he was addicted to it before she married him but she fancied (very foolishly I fear) she could cure him. This got worse till they had to live apart and I believe he drank himself to death.

So she is now a widow.¹⁹

Another letter survives at Smalhythe written to Ellen by W. S. Gilbert. The letter is of special interest since it concerns the young and beautiful Julia Neilson, who was in 1891 to marry Ellen's brother, Fred. She was a protégée of Gilbert's, and had made her début at a charity *matinée* of his *Pygmalion and Galatea* at the Lyceum in 1888. She had been harshly criticized, but Ellen's constructively critical encouragement had helped her. Gilbert wrote to Ellen on 9 October 1888:

My dear Miss Terry,

I can't thank you sufficiently for your kind letter. It will be invaluable to Miss Neilson who, as you say, stands in every

need of judicious encouragement. I think the press people are hard on her when they tell her that her acting is hopelessly & irredeemably bad. Your opinion of the piece is in the highest degree gratifying & consolatory to her. I am glad you pitched upon the little scene between the two old people, as it always appealed with peculiar force to me. You are quite right of course, in saying that Miss Neilson seems to hold herself too much in check at critical moments. This comes of nervousness, self-doubt. She *can* do better, when she is not affected by these considerations. I cannot tell you how highly I prize your letter, or how greatly it has encouraged the poor girl.

Always sincerely yours

W. S. Gilbert.

In her Memoirs, Ellen herself refers to the help she was able to give to several actresses at the beginning of their careers. She did not try to make it easy for them, and she had to be convinced of their talent and conviction before she let them draw on her encouragement. Among the many actresses she helped were Ellaline Terriss (daughter of William), Violet Vanbrugh, Lena Ashwell, Pauline Chase and Lynn Fontanne. When the talent was there, she recognized it at once; this happened when she first heard Lena Ashwell, who studied elocution at the Royal Academy of Music, and had been commended to Ellen's attention by Joe Comyns-Carr. Ellen wrote of her attempt at a speech from *Richard II*:

She began slowly, and with a most fetching voice, to think out the words. You saw her think them, heard her speak them. It was so different from the intelligent elocution, the good recitation, but bad impersonation of the others. A pathetic face, a passionate voice, a BRAIN, I thought to myself. It must have been at this point that the girl flung away the book and began to act, in an undisciplined way of course but with such true emotion, such intensity that the tears came into my eyes. The tears came to her eyes too. We both wept, and then we embraced, and then we wept again.²⁰

Later Lena Ashwell joined the Lyceum company.

Ellen actually gave a home to Lynn Fontanne until she had found a foothold in the theatre and made her way to the United States. An entry in Ellen's diaries records: 'Must get Lynn more money. It's wicked. She is so intelligent.'

Among those for whom she did much were Irving's two sons, H.B. (Henry Brodribb) and Laurence Irving, who had been brought up by their mother and as a result had little contact with their father. Irving's ambition for his sons was at first a negative one – to keep them away from the theatre. They had both done well at Marlborough College; on leaving school, young Henry (known as Harry) had expressed to his father his wish to go on the stage, which Irving had firmly rejected, persuading him to go to Oxford. Although Laurence too felt the need to act, his growing skill in modern languages pointed to a career in the diplomatic service. Harry, down from Oxford, failed at his first attempt to go on the stage, and took up the study of law before returning to the theatre. Laurence served his term in Paris and in Moscow, where he perfected his knowledge of Russian; he then returned to London and joined Frank Benson's touring company. Irving was by then forced to accept the fact that both his sons would follow him in his profession. Eventually both of them were to appear with their father; Laurence joined the Lyceum company in 1895, while Harry made a solitary appearance with him when Irving and Ellen shared the stage for the last time in *The Merchant of Venice*.

It was to Ellen that Laurence turned to ease his relations with his father. It was she who undertook, in the face of Irving's lack of interest, a single production in Chicago of Laurence's one-act play, *Godefroi and Yolande*; in this she herself played Yolande. Irving had rejected the play for the Lyceum; he considered it to be morbid because its subject involved leprosy; it was based by Laurence on Swinburne's poem *The Leper*. The revealing correspondence that took place between Laurence (then aged twenty-three) and Ellen show the hope she both fostered and fulfilled. Both letters are undated.²¹

My dear Miss Terry,

I cannot tell you how deeply I felt all your generous enthusiasm over my play.

Encouragement such as you gave me will spur me on to renewed efforts so as I may hope to merit it again. I will have another copy of the play got ready and then I will send it to you for the comments you so kindly offered to make. That copy will then be more valuable for your comments than in itself it could ever hope to be. I do not know in what words to tell you how honoured I feel at such an offer from the first of English actresses.

Believe me, My dear Miss Terry, I am very sincerely
Laurence Irving

My dear Miss Terry,

Harry has just told me you have said that if I were to ask you to play Yolande in my play you would not refuse: this of course I hasten to do: it would be the making of my play. It is a compliment to myself and my play for which I know not how to thank you. If you will play please Yolande all anxiety is taken off my shoulders: and no time would be too long for me to wait to arrive at such a consummation. It now only remains to persuade my father to play Godefroi. Deeply thanking you for what you have said you will do, as though it were already done.

Believe me, Very sincerely yours,

Laurence Irving.

As if to compensate for his coldness to his own sons, Irving acted like a father to young Teddy. As a child, Teddy could not be unaware of the close relations that had developed between Irving and his mother, for from the earliest times Irving was always calling on them at the house in Longridge Road, as well as spending weekends with them in the country. Gordon Craig wrote later that he believed Irving knew when Godwin lay dying at St Peter's Hospital, London; he had the boy to stay with him and gave him presents of books; one, Southey's *Life of Nelson*, he

inscribed, 'To my dear Ted from Henry Irving, 22 September 1886'. When Teddy had grown up and joined the company, he and Edy were allowed to call Irving Henry, as their mother had always done, and in April 1888 Irving gave him the first four volumes of the special Irving Shakespeare inscribed 'To the gay Lord Hamlet'. The following year, as we have seen, he became his godfather, and then at the age of seventeen, Teddy became an apprentice-actor under Irving's professional rule.

Teddy remained with the Lyceum company on and off until 1897. Ellen coached him as best she could, but the instinctive naturalness of her own performance made it difficult for her to act as a good instructor: 'a thing was not good to her . . . if it could not be done easily.' But she knew that Teddy needed male training, and she hired instruction for him in deportment, fencing and French.²²

During the period 1892 to 1896, Ellen had to face the sorrow of the death of her parents, Sarah in 1892 and Ben in 1896. When Sarah died, Ellen felt unable to appear for a while at the Lyceum. When she returned she found her dressing-room filled with daffodils. They were from Irving: 'to make it look like sunshine,' he said. Ellen was returning from America in 1895 when her father died as the result of pneumonia following a spring cold: the news had to be broken to her in Liverpool when the ship docked. This period, too, saw the beginning of her difficulties with Teddy, who, asserting his independence in his early twenties, was soon to leave her, giving recitals with Violet Vanbrugh (who had once been given a temporary home at Longridge Road before she began work at the Lyceum), and undertaking engagements in repertory when he was not appearing in Irving's company. In 1893 he broke away entirely from the home in Barkston Gardens which he could no longer bear because it was so dominated by women: he lived for a while alone at the Audrey Arms. Above all things, his mother wanted him to become an established actor; she believed in his talent, and so did Irving. But it was in 1893 that he came under the influence of William and Mable Nicholson, and Mable's brother, James Pryde, and through them his interest

in wood engraving first developed. Then, on 27 March, he married a young artist, May Gibson. Ellen was distracted by this sudden marriage (May even termed it an 'elopement'), though both she and Irving knew May and Mrs Gibson, the girl's mother. Irving had written very seriously to Teddy urging him not to marry early in life and offering him a splendid future at the Lyceum. But he and Ellen left for America without Teddy, whose marriage soon broke up through youthful incompatibility, though only after four children had been born. Teddy, of course, proved quite incapable of maintaining his wife and children by his casual work as an actor and an artist. 'I marry at twenty-one . . . my first female! Rather blundering,' covers his view on the matter. He turned to other loves, and by 1898 the marriage ended in divorce. Ellen paid the alimony for the remainder of her life, and constantly came to the aid of Teddy and his many children. He was at a loose end, and was scarcely to find his feet, or his creative destiny, for many years to come. But in 1900 he met Elena Mco, daughter of the artist Gaetano Mco, who though Italian-born was by this time a naturalized British subject. Elena was to prove the most lasting love of his life, and she became the mother of the two children most closely identified with him, Nelly and Edward Craig.

Edy, tall and handsome, but often distant and painfully analytical with those she loved, created no such difficulties for Ellen. Ellen had spoiled her son and encouraged his self-indulgence precisely because he was the son of Godwin: with Edy the relationship was different because Ellen seemed to see her to some extent as an extension of herself. She exaggerated wildly the scope of Edy's youthful talents – Edy was to be now a great actress, now an outstanding theatrical designer, now a splendid musician. She could, thought Ellen, grow up to become everything that was desirable in a daughter of a Terry and a Godwin.

Edy as a child had developed a sharp eye and a sharper tongue, and her mother was always liable, according to her mood, at one moment to encourage her independence of manner and at the next to scold her for impertinence. She encouraged Edy even

from childhood to make critical judgments about her performances at the Lyceum. Brought up by a small retinue of women in an atmosphere which combined restriction with indulgence, Edy became introspective, resentful, mother-proud; at times she was jealous of her brother, with his almost effeminate good looks and the attention he excited in a household dominated by the opposite sex.

Now, in the developing loneliness of the 1890s, Ellen was to find herself, for the first time, brought face to face with the problems of living both a domestic and a professional life with a daughter by no means easy to understand. According to Marguerite Steen, who knew her well, she was 'emotionally and artistically . . . more interested in, and interesting to, her own sex than to the male'. She also developed certain rather aggressive traits which held her back in her profession and often made her difficult to deal with at home. Her undoubted talents never flowered as they did in her mother and her brother. Twice she was to fall in love and wish to marry, and twice Ellen stepped in to prevent it, on the grounds that the men were unsuitable. The first love affair was with an American painter whom Edy met during the fifth American tour in 1890; the second, which occurred much later, was with the composer Martin Shaw, who was badly disfigured by a birthmark and whom Ellen considered too slovenly to marry her daughter. According to Marguerite Steen, Edy's close friend Christopher St John was so upset by the possibility of the marriage that she threatened to commit suicide. In any event, Edy, at her best a generous and warm-hearted woman, was to remain a spinster and to enter upon a period of tense and difficult relationship with her mother, whom she undoubtedly loved but whose influence she resented at times to the point of bitterness and even estrangement.

But, after her children, what mattered most to Ellen was her relationship with Irving. They destroyed almost all the intimate letters that passed between them; a very few survive and have at various times come to light.²³ The following letters give some idea of Irving's feeling for Ellen:

16 Dec 1885 (three nights before *Faust*):

No rehearsal this morning for you, my darling.

Tonight at seven dress,

Last night was a desperate affair from seven till five this morning.

Then only to end of 3rd act.

I left at one.

Today we rehearse several things – Broken scenes etc etc etc.

It was quite amusing last night – the absolute fog of some of 'em.

It will be all right – of course – but it is a stern business.

Yes a good drive today – perhaps you will drive down. But do not wear yourself out – & you shall not tonight either if I can persuade (you) to take it quietly.

What a worry you are you see.

With all my love my dearest dearest.

Between ourselves I think tonight we may struggle through 3 acts – perhaps —

7 June 1887 (after the first night of *The Amber Heart* by Alfred Calmour):

You were very lovely my darling – You yourself – alone – and there is nothing in the world beside you, *but* without you what a sad morning it would have been.

Poor Alfred he thinks its all his own I know and it never will be without you.

I wish we could talk it over now – together – I think I could tell you of the dream of beauty that you realized and were.

A lovely night of rest & peace is the wish of your own fond love.

November 1888 (a month prior to a production of *Macbeth*):

Think Fussie has got wind about going to London for last night, to my intense surprise and indignation, he collared a whole kidney – dispatching it at one bolt and then jumped upon the

sofa in the most defiant manner – with head erect and licking lips.

He was proud – very proud of his accomplishment – regardless of consequences . . .

I'm sure it was the thought of seeing you. I'd have done it too had I been Fussie – so, of course, he was forgiven.

The enclosed from that cad Coquelin is too rich. Coquelin as 'Macbeth'. What next?

Goodbye my dearest life for one, two, three days.

Each morning is a bright one now.

Undated Fragment (apparently sent from Dublin):

Soon – soon!

I shall be near you on Sunday.

God bless you my only thought

Your own till Death.

3 June 1891:

My Nell, I thought I should have seen Ted this morning – but I'm glad you took him with you.

The worst will be over now I hope – but you have had a terrible time.

No one thought – nor did I dream how bad you were. Do pray be careful.

I am anxious to see Ted & to hear of you. You gave me a lovely letter to take away with me on Monday – My own dear wife, as long as I live.

12 June 1891:

You are coming back to morrow I hope – I want to see you – & to know & feel that you are getting stronger. Let me know if you are coming & I'll be with you the moment I can . . . we must bring the summer to ourselves by being together as often as we can.

I have not heard today. Telegraph in the morning if you are coming home. You've been a long time away.

Only one letter from Ellen to Irving, written from Brighton and dated 23 October but with no year, shows the manner in which she wrote to him:

Dear – I'm better now and hope to come back to work tomorrow – I was dreadfully ill – but I struggled hard before I broke down – Thank you for *missing* me! and for your loving letter. Your Nell.²⁴

That Irving was in love with Ellen – 'the Queen of every woman', 'my own dear wife, as long as I live' – there can be no doubt at all. That she loved him, or accepted him with deep affection as her most intimate male friend, can be proved only by her actions in allowing him, over a period of many years, to visit her incessantly, to go about with her socially, to enjoy holidays with her in England, on the Continent and in North America. But no evidence exists, in spite of her remarks to Marguerite Steen, to justify the assumption that they took the grave risks involved in the final consummation of their love.²⁵

Before making the assumption that they did indeed take such a risk, as Marguerite Steen does, one must set aside the restraints imposed by their particular temperaments, by the society in which they moved, and by the particular positions that they occupied together on the English stage. While Ellen was never prudish, her past life had made her prudent and, whatever her inclinations might have been, the last thing she could have risked was yet another proven scandal or, worse still, another illegitimate child. With contraception so unpleasant and so uncertain, the risks of an unwanted pregnancy to a woman in the public eye were far too difficult to face. Nor would Irving, prudish as he was, want to risk the future of so treasured a leading lady in this way. That they indulged in unconsummated love-making is possible, but even this cannot be proved without more evidence. Such written evidence as there might ever have been they were careful to destroy.

When they went on holiday together – for example to Germany in 1885 and later to Canada – they went with other companions.

They knew that they were the subject of incessant gossip, but this much they were prepared to weather. Irving knew his wife was on the alert for concrete evidence of his unfaithfulness, and that in any case divorce, no doubt with Ellen publicly cited, could ruin their careers. Everything points to a close and loving friendship of a kind which would justify what Ellen said to young Marguerite Steen, and which was to be the forerunner to Irving's final close relationship with the devoted Mrs Aria.

According to Laurence Irving, it may well be that his grandfather in the first years of his devotion to Ellen, bought in 1882 the house in the village of Brook Green (now absorbed into the ugly sprawl of Hammersmith) in order to provide a house in which he might one day enjoy her company.²⁶ The Grange, as it was called, was a derelict mansion in a well-shaded garden, and Irving spent money on its furnishing and redecoration. Although he never made the place his home, he spent what leisure time he could there, and entertained many of his guests, including Ellen and the children. Teddy was staying there with him at the time Godwin lay dying in the hospital. But in time the house lost all meaning for its owner, and was abandoned with nothing new to take its place.

It was in the middle-nineties that their love began to cool. The fervent devotion faded, and in its place developed the regard of friends. In December 1894, Ellen began to keep a private diary of her reflections on Irving as an actor and as a man. This splendid analysis is warm, yet accurate, and most courageous in the face of what Ellen realized she must be losing as his affections moved elsewhere.²⁷ Here are extracts from this diary:

1895: He is so careful and cautious. I wish he were more ingenuous and more direct. A thousand little things prove he has no idea of his own beauty – personal beauty. . . . I grant his intellectuality dominates his other powers and gifts, but I have never seen in living man, or picture, such distinction of bearing.

12 September 1895: I think it is not quite right in him that he does not care for anybody much. (I think he has always

cared for me a little, very little, and has had passing fancies, but he really *cares* for scarcely any one.) Quiet, patient, tolerant, impersonal, gentle, *close*, crafty! Crafty sounds unkind, but it is H.I. 'Crafty' fits him.

1896: His work, his work! He has always held his life, and his death, second to his work. When he dies, it will be because he is tired out. . . . I have a quick ear for different people's *step*, and a familiar step I generally hear before I see the stepper, but though I have listened for many years for Henry Irving's step, *I have never heard it*.

I consider I have been of a good deal of use to him as a buffer between him and his company.

H.I. is much handsomer now than when I first knew him in 1867. Handsomer, but somehow more furtive-looking. Is his dominant note intellectuality? Yes. I think so. He has so much character. . . .

He is a very *gentle* man, though not in the least a *tender* man.

1897: Very odd. He is not improving with age.

February 1898: His hold upon *me* is that he is INTERESTING no matter how he behaves. I think he must be put down among the 'Greats', and that *that* is his only fault. He is Great. Constantine, Nero, Caesar, Charlemagne, Peter, Napoleon, all 'Great', all selfish, all, but all INTERESTING. Interesting, but terrors in the family.

January 1899: I wonder how his other friends and lovers feel to him. I have contempt and affection and admiration. What a mixture!

He evidently doesn't like taking favours from any of his friends (which he is obliged to do at present). I don't think it *gracious* to be unable to take favours sweetly. He will take them, but will *not* acknowledge them.

He wrote and asked me to go down and see him at Bournemouth. I went, and found him looking much better. He wanted

to tell me that not only was he broken in health but he was what is called 'ruined'. At which word I refused to shed tears, for, said I: 'As long as you and I have health, we have means of wealth. We can pack a bag, each of us, and trot round the Provinces. Yes, and go to America, Australia, India, Japan, and pick up money by the bushel, even were we to take just the magic book of Shakespeare along with us.' I then asked his plans, and he astonished me by saying: 'That's why I asked you to come down to Bournemouth. (He might have written, but no; he'd not *write* that.) I propose – have in fact written to the managers – going round the English provinces with a very small company, and playing *The Bells*, *Louis XI*, *Waterloo*, and perhaps another play.' Long pause. I didn't think it *possible* I heard aright. 'What plays?' said I. '*Bells*, *Louis*, *Waterloo*,' he said irritably. 'Well, and where do I come in?' said I. 'Oh well, for the present, at all events, there's no chance of acting at the Lyceum.' (He looked exceedingly silly.) 'For the present, you can, of course, er, *do as you like!*'

I felt – a good many feelings! At top of all came amusement to save the situation. 'Then,' said I, 'I have in plain terms what Ted would call "the dirty kick out"?'

'Well – er – for the present I don't see what can be done, and I daresay you —' I cut him short. 'Oh, I daresay I shall get along somehow. Have I your permission to shift for myself, and make up a tour for myself?' 'Yes.' 'For how long?' 'Well, I can scarcely say.' 'Until Christmas next?' 'Yes.'

April 1900: H. has sciatica badly. Really he has a very dull time of it, it seems to me, and I believe for the first time begins to appreciate my very long service, to know I am valuable.

October 1900: He has terrified me once or twice by his exhaustion and feebleness. Then he appears grateful to us all, for we *all* give him *all*. But when he gets a little better, anything so icy, indifferent, and almost contemptuous, I never saw.²⁸

The draft of a letter from Irving to Ellen survives in a small

notebook in which he pencilled his thoughts during 1904 in America when he went on his first and only tour there without her. It shows no diminution in their friendship, though it bears no sign of love:

As you say how long will this work go on? I would be glad to end now – in Oct 1906 I shall [have] been on the stage 50 years and think that will have been enough.

There is much to be done with properly organized farewell tours – in 2 years or in 4 – and I'm sure if possible we ought to be together, the public want it here and at home. . . . How beautiful the first *Becket* was in many ways and how impossible to match in any way.

I see that Master Edward is starting a dramatic school not to [be] left out of it. I think you and I should. . . . We should have lots of pupils.²⁹

That Ellen, even when approaching fifty, was not free from the embarrassments of gossip is proved by the fact that her name was linked with that of her leading man, Frank Cooper, who returned to the company in 1896 to play Mordred in *King Arthur*. Ellen was thought to be showing him a certain partiality. In 1899, during Irving's illness, she toured the provinces with him independently as her leading man; a descendant of the Kemble family, he was a reflection of Charles Kelly whom she had known for twenty years. The gossip merely amused her, as she wrote to her friend Bertha Bramly from Hull on 30 October during the arduous provincial tour of 1897:

No – I fear I can't snap up Frank Cooper (!) and marry him, for he happens to have a wife – and she's nice too – so he can't 'cut her throat with a bar of soap' – She is a jealous little lady too, but *not* of me – and I'm fond of her. 'They marry me to every man I act with – 'She acts so naturally' they say – 'it must be real' – Silly-fool-Asses!!! Mrs Finch Hatton told me a few days since that my Edy was engaged to be married – I knew nothing about it but as Edy is away I sent her congratulations!!!

She thought it very polite of me but knew nothing about the matter.

One of the actresses whom Irving eventually engaged to replace Ellen was Lena Ashwell, whose talent Ellen had recognized at the Royal College of Music. 'She has to work. Her life must be given to it, and then she will – well, she will achieve just as high as she works,' Ellen had written of her in her diary. To the girl who called to see her in Barkston Gardens in a daze of heroine-worship she had said: 'Get experience; do anything, go anywhere, but get experience.' Lena Ashwell's career on the stage began in 1891, and Ellen constantly helped her with recommendations to the actor-managers of the day. In 1895 she joined the Lyceum company and played Elaine in *King Arthur*. When in 1896 she returned to play the Prince of Wales in *Richard III*, she sensed the change that was gradually overtaking the Lyceum: 'The atmosphere was different; the resilience had gone,' she wrote. Irving's ill-health was impeding his mastery of production. She was so upset by the petty rivalries and gossip in the company she had so revered that Irving found her one night quietly weeping beside the stage. 'You know, we were born crying,' he told her in an effort to console. Later still, in 1903, when he was on tour in Glasgow, he summoned her by telegram to come up north to see him. When she came, he offered her during his farewell tours the place in his company which Ellen had vacated.³⁰

In effect, Ellen never really left Irving until she finally refused an offer from him of £12,000 to tour the United States in *Dante*.³¹ But she was always ready to reappear with him in their old, surviving repertoire, in particular *The Merchant of Venice*. But she realized it was useless to maintain an association which was becoming a burden to them both, and that her future, and those of her many dependents, which now included Teddy's children, required her to try to make a new career for herself.³² It was a cruel twilight in the evening of her professional life, for she had had no real experience either in management or production, and had little idea of what to do for the best. Meanwhile, there were

some minor offers to accept. For example, she appeared as Queen Katherine in Benson's production of *Henry VIII* on Shakespeare's birthday at Stratford.

It was during this period of partial retirement from the Lyceum that she was invited by Beerbohm Tree, perhaps Irving's closest rival, to play Mistress Page in the spectacular production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at His Majesty's Theatre in 1902. Mistress Ford had already been given to Mrs Kendal, whom theatrical gossip classed as the actress most jealous of Ellen's position in the theatre. Irving gave her his permission to appear with a rival company and on the opening night sent her a telegram of good wishes: 'Heaven give you many many merry days and nights.' This joint appearance with Madge Kendal and Tree invited a measure of malicious gossip.³³

In 1902, Ellen moved from Barkston Gardens to No 215 King's Road, Chelsea. She wrote to Stephen Coleridge, who negotiated the purchase for her: 'Please get this 215 house insured for me quickly or the ill-luck of a fire might chance! and my few good pictures? Sorry to be such a trouble.'³⁴ The year before she had bought Smallhythe.

After her final provincial tour with Irving was over at the end of the year, Ellen decided to enter into management, most of all to help Teddy. In 1903 she took a short lease of the Imperial Theatre, Westminster, and, in April, while Irving was presenting *Dante* at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, she presented Ibsen's play, *The Viking's* with sets and production by Gordon Craig. She herself was quite unsuitably cast as Hiordis. The production was an utter failure with the public, lasting only twenty-four performances, and the costs, though not recorded, led her into heavy losses. The theatre had to be changed structurally to accommodate the settings, and new lighting was installed to create the effects that Teddy wanted. *The Vikings* was hurriedly replaced by *Much Ado about Nothing*, in which she naturally appeared as Beatrice with Oscar Asche as Benedick. In his memoirs of the period, Gordon Craig blames the ineptness of the business manager Ellen had insisted on employing. The fault lay probably with all

of them, with Teddy's over-ambitious handling of the stage and Ellen's incapacity for either business or publicity.

To recover something of her losses, Ellen undertook a provincial tour without her son, presenting *Much Ado about Nothing* and *The Good Hope*, a play by the contemporary Dutch dramatist Herman Heijermans, which had been translated by Edy's friend, Christabel Marshall (Christopher St John). Apart from these personal connexions, there can have been no other good reason for presenting *The Good Hope*. Once more, Ellen played a part which was scarcely suited to her, that of Kniertje, an elderly woman in a small Dutch fishing village. She claims that this play succeeded in the provinces. After appearing for the last time with Irving in July before he sailed to America without her, all she had in prospect was *Alice-sit-by-the-fire*, a sentimental play which James Barrie wrote in the hope that she would appear in it. She did not enjoy the experience. 'I was never happy in my part, perhaps because although it had been made to measure, it didn't fit me. I sometimes felt that I was bursting the seams! I was accustomed to broader work in a larger theatre.'

Meanwhile, Ted had disappeared to Germany. There, about a year later, he was to meet and fall in love with Isadora Duncan, whom he called Topsy. The relationship lasted, it would seem, until 1906.

In one sense at least, Ellen's heart was still with Irving. She suffered with those that she saw suffering. When Irving fell ill in Glasgow in 1899, she had written of him to Edy:

I am still fearfully anxious about H. It will be a long time at best before he regains strength. . . . All he wants is for me to keep my health – not my *head*! He knows I'm doing that! Last night I did three acts of *Sans-Gêne* with *Nance Oldfield* thrown in! That is a bit too much – awful work – and I can't risk it again. . . . A telegram just come: 'Steadily improving'. . . . You should have seen Norman as Shylock! It was not a bare 'get-through'. An admirable performance as well as a plucky

one. H. is more seriously ill than anyone dreams. His look! Like the last act of *Louis XI*.³⁵

In the spring of 1905, when she heard he was lying ill in Wolverhampton, she hurried north to see him. She took the precaution of seeing his doctor first, and learned his heart was severely strained, and that he must spare himself. Then she went to see him. It was their last meeting:

He looked like some beautiful grey tree that I have seen in Savannah. His old dressing-gown hung about his frail yet majestic figure like some mysterious grey drapery.

We were both very moved, and said little.

'I'm glad you've come. Two Queens have been in to me this morning. Queen Alexandra telegraphed to say how sorry she was I was ill, and now you - ' . . .

We fell to talking about work. He said he hoped that I had a good manager . . . agreed very heartily with me about Frohman, saying he was always so fair - more than fair.

'What a wonderful life you've had, haven't you?' I exclaimed, thinking of it all in a flash.

'Oh, yes,' he said quietly . . . 'a wonderful life - of work.'

'And there's nothing better, after all is there?'

'Nothing.'

'What have you got out of it all? . . . You and I are "getting on" as they say. Do you ever think, as I do sometimes, what you have got out of life?'

'What have I got out of it?' said Henry, stroking his chin and smiling slightly. 'Let me see . . . Well, a good cigar, a good glass of wine - good friends.' Here he kissed my hand with courtesy. Always he was so courteous; always his actions, like this little one of kissing my hand, were so beautifully timed. They came just before the spoken words, and gave them peculiar value.

'That's not a bad summing-up of it all,' I said. 'And the end. . . . How would you like that to come?'

'How would I like that to come?' He repeated my question

lightly, yet meditatively too. Then he was silent for some thirty seconds before he snapped his fingers – the action again before the words.

‘Like that!’³⁶

The local doctor in Wolverhampton told her Irving should never undertake the strain of playing Mathias again. This particular performance put the heaviest burden on his weakened body. His heart would throb from the sheer stress of his imagination, and the death of Mathias was performed with fearful physical intensity. In spite of this, later that year at Bradford he insisted on attempting yet another performance in the part. The doctor was right; he lasted only long enough to play *Becket* on the following night, Friday 13 October, barely surviving the performance. Within a few minutes of the curtain-fall he lay dead in the lobby of his hotel. Bram Stoker’s description of this moment reads with the shock of real loss:

In the hall were some twenty men grouped round Irving who lay at full length on the floor. . . .

It was almost impossible to believe, as he lay there with his eyes open, that he was really dead. I knelt down by him and felt his heart to know for myself if it was indeed death. But all was sadly still. His body was quite warm. Walter Collinson, his faithful valet, was sitting on the floor beside him, crying. He said to me through his sobs: ‘He died in my arms!’

His face looked very thin and the features sharp as he lay there with his chest high and his head fallen back; but there was none of the usual ungracefulness of death. The long iron-grey hair had fallen back, showing the great height of his rounded forehead. The bridge of his nose stood out sharp and high. I closed his eyes myself but as I had no experience in such a matter I asked one of the doctors, who kindly with deft fingers straightened the eyelids. Then we carried him upstairs to his room and laid him on his bed.³⁷

Irving had once told Ellen he hoped they would bury him in

Wesminster Abbey. This was not said in arrogance, but as a claim for the status of the profession. Ellen attended the funeral service, salving her sorrow at his death with the buoyant thought: 'How Henry would have liked it!' She had memories too, of attending Tennyson's funeral in 1892 with Irving by her side. 'No face there looked anything by the side of Henry's,' she had written then in her diary. Now she was there again, and it was he who lay in the coffin:

How terribly I missed that face at Henry's own funeral! I kept on expecting to see it, for indeed it seemed to me that he was directing the whole most moving and impressive ceremony. I could almost hear him saying, 'Get on! get on!' in the parts of the service that dragged. When the sun – such a splendid, tawny sun – burst across the solemn misty grey of the Abbey, at the very moment when the coffin, under its superb pall of laurel leaves was carried up the choir, I felt that it was an effect which he would have loved.³⁸

IX

SHAW

When George Bernard Shaw wrote his first letter to Ellen Terry in June 1892 he was almost thirty-six and she was forty-five. The heart of the correspondence that followed between 1895 and 1900 is among the most celebrated in the history of British letter-writing. These letters were for Shaw an ideal climax to a long, involved and frequently stormy relationship with women which was only fully revealed well after his death in 1950. However, he had had something to say about this himself, and during his lifetime gave certain details to his principal biographers, as well as publishing some revealing autobiographical essays a year before his death in his book, *Sixteen Self Sketches*.

The Irish romantic in Shaw's complex nature demanded admiration from women, while the ascetic in his make-up eventually led him to abandon early in life any further subservience to the physical demands of sex. These demands he quickly exhausted, more especially in his love affairs with the widow Jenny Patterson and the actress Florence Farr.¹ Mrs Patterson, who had money and lived in Brompton Square, was his mother's pupil; she was fifteen years older than Shaw, whom (according to her victim) she seduced on his twenty-ninth birthday. He soon found her to be 'sexually insatiable', and for some years she both attracted and plagued him. He suffered continually from her tormented jealousy, which was aroused by the growing number of women he was encouraging to fall in love with him. In spite of this their relationship lasted until 1893, by which time Shaw's passion for philandering had brought him intimacy elsewhere.

Florence Farr, an actress of great beauty with progressive views on women's independence, was another woman with whom he

consummated love. She was a lady of some means who had been deserted by her actor husband, and Shaw first met her when she was learning embroidery from May Morris, the daughter of William Morris. He was a constant visitor to the aesthete-socialist's luxurious home and, while enjoying a secret understanding with May Morris and contracting what he chose to call a 'celestial marriage' with her, he felt a more earth-like passion for her pupil and turned to Florence Farr for purely physical pleasures after their first meeting in 1890. He wrote parts for her into his plays, *Widowers' Houses* and *The Philanderer*; later she was to appear in *Arms and the Man*. It would seem that Shaw's particular kind of sexuality, which Florence Farr was to describe later as 'passion served up with cold sauce', was insufficient to satisfy her and she turned to others, leaving Shaw to feel jealous; she kept a 'Leporello list' which, Shaw told his biographer Hesketh Pearson, included by 1894 the names of fourteen available men. In the end, she turned from Shaw to W. B. Yeats, who wrote for her his *Land of Heart's Desire*.

From the gentle, tranquil Florence Shaw turned to May Morris and then to a variety of loves including Annie Besant, Karl Marx's daughter Eleanor, and Edith Nesbit, the author of books for children, and Bertha Newcombe. 'Whenever I think of my behaviour in those days I grow afraid of myself,' wrote Shaw. 'I don't know why it was but all the women I really *cared* for were already married.' May Morris eventually married Henry Halliday Sparling, and then left her husband on Shaw's account, though Shaw was never to marry her. Annie Besant, who had deserted her clergyman husband to become, for a while, a militant atheist and propagandist for birth-control, was a close friend of Shaw's in the later 1880s, but lost contact with him when she finally became a convert to theosophy. Eleanor Marx, who was of the same age as Shaw, gave him up to enter a 'free marriage' with the already married journalist, Edward Aveling. Shaw met Edith Nesbit through the Fabian Society; she was unhappy with her husband, who was constantly unfaithful to her. She fell so openly in love with Shaw, also during the 1880s, that he had very firmly

to cover his retreat. According to one of his biographers, entries in his unpublished diaries reveal simultaneous 'attachments' in the late 1880s and around 1890 to seven women at one time, some Fabians and some actresses; among the actresses was Janet Achurch, whose marriage became threatened because of her affection for Shaw. But of all these women, Shaw only admitted to having sexual relations with Jenny Patterson and Florence Farr. It would appear that though he was inordinately fond of women he was, like many philanderers, both undersexed and masochistically afraid of the very ardour he set out to encourage. He even inspired the attentions of the well-known Lesbian Kate Joynes, who lived in unconsummated matrimony with his friend Henry Salt, the humanitarian. As for the painter Bertha Newcombe, she was Beatrice Webb's nominee for the position of Shaw's future wife. But he was not to marry her either.

By the time he first entered into correspondence with Ellen, Shaw could claim to be an experienced philanderer and observer of women, though his understanding of love was to some extent limited owing to his insatiable and self-conscious curiosity about it. Though active in the pursuit of all the women who attracted him, he remained, in one sense at least, a voyeur. His initial response to the first lady of the British stage was careful. Their first letters concerned a young singer whom Ellen wanted to help but who, as music critic on *The World*, Shaw felt lacked genuine talent. Ellen expressed her gratitude warmly: 'Thank you. Thank you, *Thank you* for all your beautifulness.' By the time he had reached the third of the letters to her from him which have been preserved, Shaw had decided to send her his book *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, which had been published in 1891, and was calling her 'irresistible Ellen' and accusing her of wasting herself by playing in such old-fashioned rubbish as *Nance Oldfield* while the new drama stood waiting for her genius to bring it to light. Then the correspondence lapsed for over two years. During this interval, he had himself begun to contribute to the new drama with *Widowers' Houses* and had entered upon his fierce campaign against the conventional drama by becoming in January 1895

dramatic critic for Frank Harris's *Saturday Review*. His main target for attack was Sir Henry Irving, head of the reactionary established theatre, which Shaw regarded as 'childish'. The principal object of his adulation was Irving's leading lady, with whom he renewed his correspondence in July 1895 in an attempt to seduce her from Irving.

This second stage in the correspondence, the heart of it, began when Ellen was at a susceptible period in her life. Her youth, in spite of her beauty and her ageless vivacity, had gone, and her climacteric was approaching. Her health was not very good, and her eyes in particular gave her much trouble. She was already a grandmother, and though delighting in her grandchildren she was very distressed by the irresponsible behaviour of her genius of a son. Her relations with her daughter were difficult; Edy, while loving her mother in her own way, was a self-centred and at times unresponsive girl whose undoubted talents were finding no outlet satisfactory either to herself or to her mother. And her private relationship with Irving was gradually fading no less irredeemably than her partnership with him on the stage. She was more than ready for another man to appear and sweep her off on some magic carpet, more especially if it was a magic carpet which made no physical demands upon her.

Shaw has called his correspondence with Ellen 'a paper courtship', and he regarded it as 'perhaps the pleasantest, as it is the most enduring, of all courtship'. And then he added what for many people has seemed the most inhuman aspect of his celebrated relationship with Ellen: 'We both felt instinctively that a meeting might spoil it, and would certainly alter it and bring it into conflict with other personal relationships. And so I hardly ever saw her, except across the footlights, until the inevitable moment at last arrived when we had to meet daily at the rehearsals of the play I wrote for her: *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*.' This meeting did not take place until 1900, by which time Shaw was already married. There was to be a moment of seeming disenchantment: 'I'm very cold,' wrote Ellen subsequently, 'and they say you could not bear me, when we met, that one time, under the stage.'

But Shaw has made it clear there was no disenchantment, only the natural waning of a friendship which had for a while been the most important one in his life, but which had ceased to have significance once he had married Charlotte Payne Townsend in 1898.

The correspondence resumed after a gap which lasted from July 1892 until March 1895. Shaw, as dramatic critic for the *Saturday Review*, became an ardent member of the audience at the Lyceum – not, as everyone came to realize, because of Irving's art but because of Ellen. When she began to respond to him in letters which were so alive and personal, Shaw realized that Ellen Terry could be the greatest conquest of his career. Ellen was not a member of the circle of intellectual women in which Shaw normally moved; she belonged to an altogether larger sphere, and her beauty and charm were precisely of the unsensual kind most likely to delight him at this stage of his maturity. Shaw was fighting for recognition as a dramatist, and he entertained high hopes of conquering Irving himself with Ellen's help. His approach to her, therefore, had a double purpose – to win both the lady and the actress. Now that she had reached fifty, Shaw doggedly maintained that she stood in need of him and of the new intellectual drama which he represented. And he fully realized that he stood in need of her. She was, after all, the first lady of the London stage. She was obviously intrigued from the start by the imper-tinently challenging letters she began to receive in 1895, castigating Irving and the Lyceum productions and urging her to take interest in the plays he sent her to read. 'Your lovely letters,' she is writing by May 1896, and the vigorous response she got in correspondence which expanded into fascinating essays on the playing of Shakespeare or on the virtues of Ibsen and the modern drama soon excited her ready interest and finally her affection. They were on first-name terms by the end of the year, and sending each other highly literate kisses through the letter-box.

Shaw's philandering, as much *jeu d'esprit* as it was *jeu d'amour*, exactly suited Ellen's needs at this time. She needed to feel admired and wanted in her private life, and Shaw could fulfil this to



20. Ellen Terry as Iolanthe,
about 1880



21. Ellen Terry, on tour in
Birmingham in about 1881





23. Henry Irving. Portrait by Bastien-Lepage
(By courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.)

24. Sargent's sketch of Ellen
Terry as Lady Macbeth





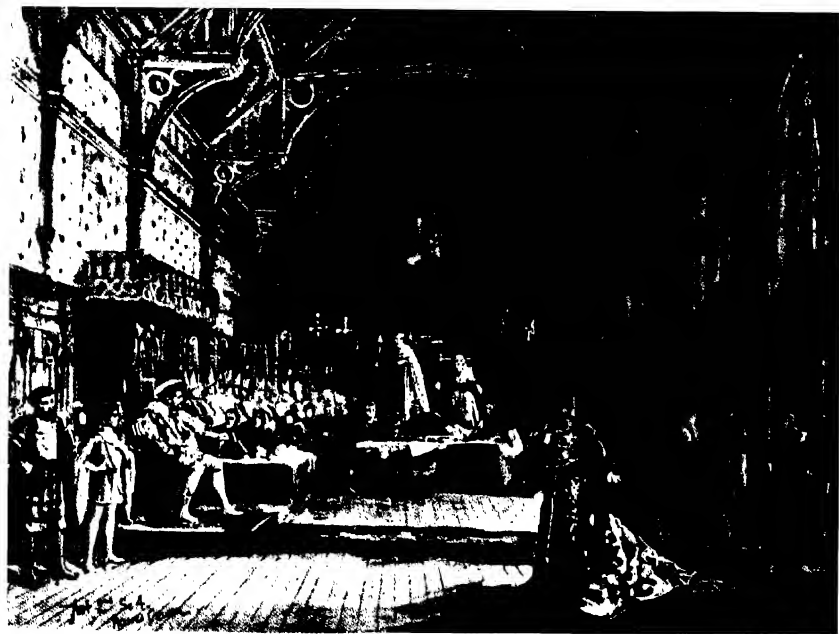


27. Ellen Terry as Catherine Duval in
The Dead Heart, with Gordon Craig





28. Ellen Terry as Queen Katherine in *Henry VIII*, Act II, Scene iv. Drawing by Bernard Partridge





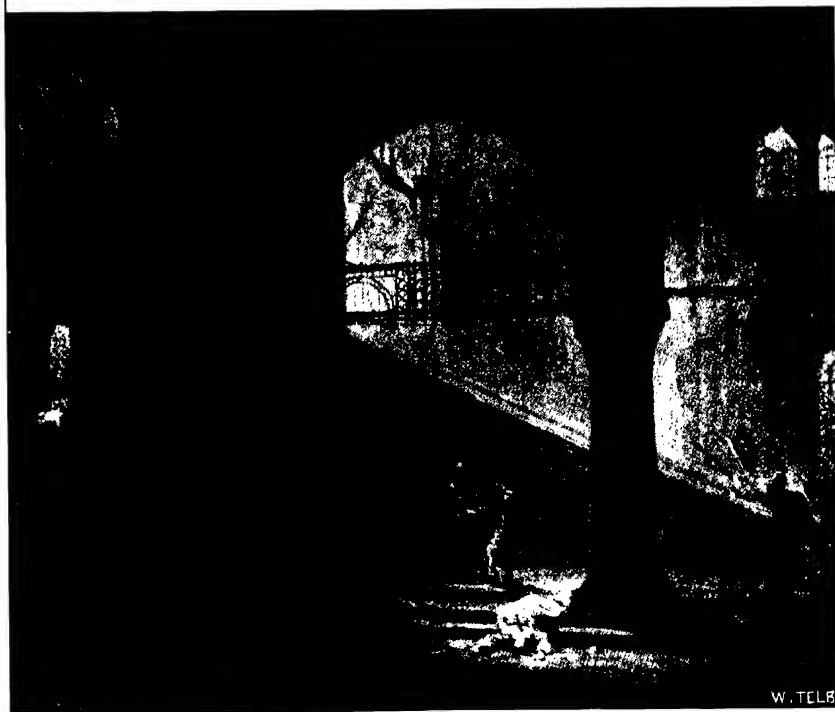
30. The awakening scene from *King Lear*.
Drawing by Hawes Craven



31. Ellen Terry as Rosamund in *Becket*,
1893



31a. Henry Irving in *Becket*
(By courtesy of Pamela Hansford John)





32. Ellen Terry as Imogen in *Cymbeline*, 1895





33. Ellen Terry as Catherine in *Madame Sans-Gêne*, 1897



34. Ellen Terry as Volumnia in *Coriolanus*, 1901



35. Ellen Terry as Lady Cecily
Waynflete in *Captain Brassbound's
Conversion*, 1906



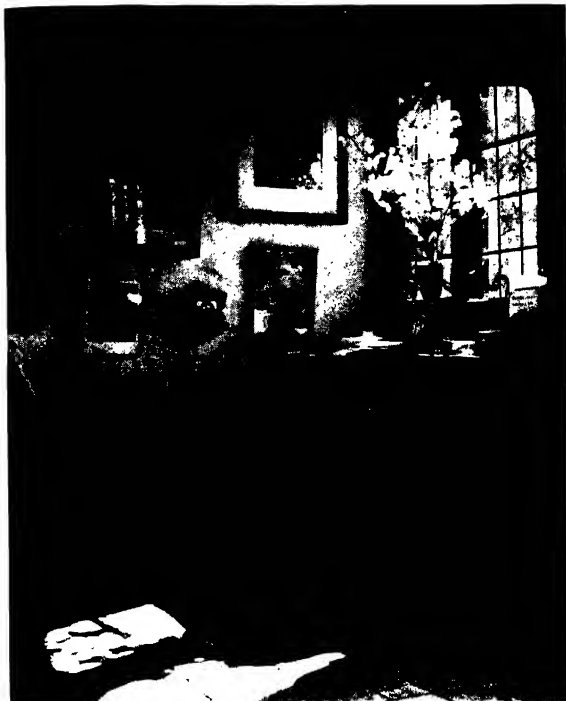


37. Film stills from *The Invasion of Britain*, 1918. Ellen Terry as the Mother receiving news of her son's heroism and immediately afterwards the telegram announcing his death (By courtesy of the National Film Archive.)

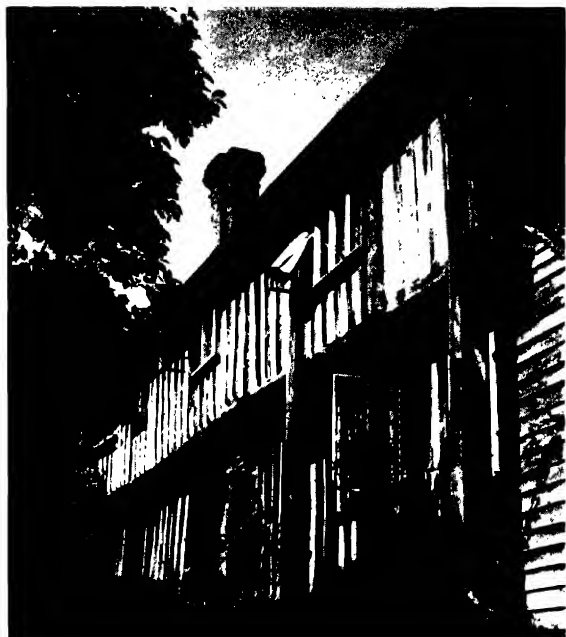


38. Film stills from *The Bohemian Girl*, 1922. Ellen Terry as the Nurse appealing to her master after the loss of his child (By courtesy of the National Film Archive.)





39. Smallhythe, photograph
by Ellen Terry's great-
granddaughter, Helen Craig



40. The garden at Smallhythe
Photograph by Helen Craig



an extravagant degree. She also needed a man to challenge her as a woman, to stretch and temper her latent capacities grown slack through the easy adulations of the Lyceum, which no longer made any real demands upon her. Here was the cleverest man of the age about to buzz round her head like a wasp and send her marvellous letters which were full of light and air, and the dry heat of his intellect. Even more delightful still, she was herself to be a match for him; her own letters evidently proved equally marvellous to him as his seemed to her. Indeed they reveal her at the height of her capacity as a woman to respond on an intellectual level to this man who could see through so many pretences in human nature, and who wanted to share with a woman of outstanding intelligence and understanding the revaluations coursing through his mind. 'Part of her remarkable mental endowment was a sure touch with men,' wrote Shaw. The correspondents had an exactly balanced respect for each other as human beings, male and female, and each brought out the very best in the other. When they discovered each other's faults, they commented on them with an exactitude and generosity which could never give offence.

Shaw, it must be remembered, was hated by most people working in the conventional theatre of the period. Irving could never understand Ellen's predilection for this man he called 'Pshaw', who rent the veil of the temple he had dedicated to his own genius. Laurence Irving, whom Shaw, like Ellen, had befriended, told Shaw: 'All my people think you the most appalling Yahoo.' Yet never for an instant did Ellen doubt the sincerity or the capacity of Shaw; as he put it himself, when he was 'posturing as a sort of half-starved Mephistopheles with a success that imposed on the whole theatrical West End, Ellen Terry, without hesitation or effort, went straight through the imposture to the real man and nursed him like a baby, though always taking his judgment seriously even when it did not jump with her own. . . . Shaw made all the world his stage and was not supposed to be acting, in spite of his frequent clownings and the mask of mountebankery which Ellen Terry saw through so easily.'²

Shaw was Irish, and this in itself attracted Ellen in the first place. Unlike Irving, Shaw also understood the problems of an ageing actress who remained fixed in established parts most of which were by now far too youthful for her, or was being forced to play new parts of such insignificance that they could only be regarded as an insult to her qualities. Shaw was acutely aware of the difference between Ellen and Irving: 'She, all brains and sympathy, scattering them everywhere and on everybody; he, all self, concentrating that self on his stage as on a pedestal.' Yet, as Shaw observed, the combination worked, until time and Shaw himself came along to undo it. She was lucky, Shaw thinks, in her men, by which he meant Irving and himself: 'If we take it that a clever woman's most amusing toys are interesting men we must admit that Ellen Terry was fortunate in her two dolls.'³

Shaw's attacks on Irving were not merely negative, the expression of his reaction against what he held to be Irving's outworn conventions of performance. He recognized in Irving a unique theatrical personality: 'I instinctively felt that a new drama inhered in this man.' Although he found Irving's performance peculiar, if not grotesque, he acknowledged the actor's magnetism, 'which forced the spectator to single him out as a leading figure'. Only Charlie Chaplin had possessed this quality since Irving, Shaw was to write in 1931. To Shaw, Irving's devotion to a kind of melancholy fustian on the stage was a pervasion of his genius, and it was because of this that he castigated him in the *Saturday Review*, while at the same time recognizing all the qualities of his *genre* acting in *The Bells* or *Louis XI*. His performances in Shakespeare he regarded as 'impostures' worked out with awful care to fulfil some fancy of his own; his Hamlet, thought Shaw, was not Shakespeare's, but Irving's. So by the time Shaw became critic of the *Saturday Review* he had come to regard Irving's years at the Lyceum as 'an exasperating waste of the talent of the two artists who had seemed to me peculiarly fitted to lift the theatre out of its old ruts and head it towards unexplored regions of drama'. To present Shakespeare, therefore, especially as Irving presented him, was a waste of time compared

with presenting Ibsen, or even his own small curtain-raiser, *The Man of Destiny*, which he wrote for Irving and Ellen and which was to become the cause of so much unseemly haggling between the greatest actor and the greatest playwright in the British theatre at the turn of the century.⁴

According to Shaw he was successful in his seduction of Ellen from Irving:

This correspondence shows how, because Irving would not put his peculiar talent at thy service of the new and intensely interesting development of the drama which had begun with Ibsen, and because he wasted not only his own talent but Ellen's, I destroyed her belief in him and gave shape and consciousness to her sense of having her possibilities sterilized by him. Then her position became unbearable; and she broke loose from the ogre's castle, as I called it, only to find that she had waited too long for his sake, and that her withdrawal was rather a last service to him than a first to herself.⁵

Yet Shaw never ceased to pay tribute to Irving's extraordinary capacities: 'Even to call him eminent belittles his achievement: he was pre-eminent.'

In the letters, however, Shaw constantly attacks Irving. He appears jealous, or mock-jealous, of him: 'I once or twice have met you on Richmond Terrace or thereabouts with him like two children in a gigantic perambulator, and have longed to seize him, throw him out, get up, take his place, and calmly tell the coachman to proceed.'⁶ After he and Irving had met to discuss *The Man of Destiny*, Shaw wrote: 'I like Henry, though he is without exception absolutely the stupidest man I ever met. Simply no brains – nothing but character and temperament.'⁷ The clue to his acting, according to Shaw, was one of self-hypnosis: 'The condition in which he works is a somnambulistic one: he hypnotizes himself into a sort of dreamy energy, and is intoxicated by the humming of his words in his nose. Besides, he escapes the terrible fatigue of thought and intellectual self-consciousness, through having no brains.'⁸ He was well aware that Irving

detested him for his eloquent depreciation of everything Irving held most sacred. Having said in the *Saturday Review* that it was a relief to see a production of *Olivia* without Irving for once, Shaw wrote to Ellen:

There was a terrible thing in that *Olivia* notice . . . that it was a relief to get rid of him for a moment at the Lyceum. It was not so brutal as that; but as he does not understand critical points, and treats all intellectual positions as mere matters of feeling, he probably took it in that way and was hurt by it; and he will perhaps think it unfeeling of you not to be angry with me for saying it. So be kind to him, and if he is clever enough to tell you on that afternoon drive – as I should in his place – that he is giving up the play because he is jealous of me about you, take his part and console him: it is when a man is too much hurt to do the perfectly magnanimous thing that he most needs standing by.⁹

In his championship of Ellen, Shaw saw her as sacrificed on the altar of Irving's dedicated egotism; 'he is an ogre who has carried you off to his cave,' Shaw wrote, 'and now Childe Roland is coming to the dark tower to rescue you.'¹⁰ He sent her the most detailed analysis for the treatment of the various scenes and speeches in *Cymbeline* – an affrontery, it might seem, had not both he and Ellen enjoyed writing their lengthy letters enormously, and had she not found what he said to be both apt and helpful. By now she felt safe enough with him to send him her private analysis of the Lyceum company; 'There's something good in each one,' she added, before making her comments:

Cymbeline (Macklin) Will look superb.

Cloten (Forbes) Has brains.

Posthumus (Cooper) A lovely voice, and never shouts.

Guiderius (Webster) Shouts, but has a sweet face.

Arviragus (Teddy) Has 'some of the charm which for centuries belonged' to his ma-ma.

Belarius (F. Robinson) 'What a proud stomach!' And one critic

I know will discover that *at last* an actor has arrived in our midst who can deliver Blank Verse. Looks as if he were going to deliver something else. Oh! and as H.I. says: 'You can hear him' (I wish I couldn't).

Pisanio (Tyars) Well, he always looks well.

Cornelius (Lacy) Was a parson! So he must be 'good'.

Iachimo (H.I.) Well, do you know I think we agree, you and I, that he's quite a decent actor.

Queen (Gene. Ward) She was the pupil of Ristori. Hang it!

Imogen A painstaking person, but I fear will look a sight.

They *All* work with earnestness, are 'sober, clean' and perfect (in their words). Except E.T. who will never know those Confounded Words.¹¹

'Tear this up, quick, quick!' she writes on the top of this, though Shaw fortunately never did so. Of her own shortcomings (as she saw them) she wrote a remarkably revealing letter on 22 September 1896:

... spite of all your goodness to me I shall do nothing tonight. It's not because I've left my effects to chance. I've settled what I want to try for, but I'm *all earth* instantly I get on the stage for this part. No inspiration, no softness, no sadness even. Tight, mechanical, *hide-bound*. I feel nothing. I know some of myself. In a few days it will all be different. I think it is the result of physical weariness. My head is tired. I cant care, cant think, cant feel. *Can Not*. After the carefulest thinking and practising every detail of my blessed work, something comes upon me. (This is when things go well and right. It has nothing to do with my will.) I feel exquisitely, and then, I realize the situation (in the play) and all is golden.

But no 'gold' tonight. Only dull mud. I cant help it, dear fellow. You see it has nothing to do with me. If I ever act well, it's accident. It's *divine*, isnt it? There's a double movement somewhere, for all the while one is receiving this gracious dew from heaven, this fire and warmth, one is turning oneself, as it were, to be basted properly.¹²

By May 1897, Shaw's attack on Irving became harsh, almost desperate: 'Your career has been sacrificed to the egotism of a fool: he has warmed his wretched hands callously at the embers of nearly twenty of your priceless years; and now they will flame up, scorch his eyes, burn off his rum-bathed hair, and finally consume him.'¹³ In February 1898 he is more analytical of her situation:

If you once realize that the sacrifice of the other parts is not a conscious, malicious, jealous, direct act of his, but an inevitable condition of his methods and effects, you will see that you, too, must be sacrificed. That he is not crudely jealous is shewn by the fact that he has no objection to your success in *Sans-Gêne* and *Nance Oldfield*, where, since he is not on the stage, your playing does not interfere with his. But the moment he is there, he cannot work out his slow, laboured, self-absorbed stage conceptions unless you wait for him and play to him. This is a frightful handicap for you. Increase it by a bad part and the task becomes impossible.¹⁴

By February 1900, with Ellen still tied, as he saw it, to Irving's bishop like apron-strings, he seems to accept the inevitable with resignation:

I have always foreseen, and foretold to you, that when it came to the point, you would find it practically impossible to detach yourself from the Lyccum. And apart from the business reasons, the breaking up of an old partnership like yours and H.I.'s is not a thing to be done except on extreme occasions. It was my feeling concerning this that made me so very determined not to let you interfere in the *Man of Destiny* squabble. I wrote *Brassbound* for you merely for the sake of writing it for you, without any faith in your ever being able to produce it, knowing that the existence of the play would strengthen your hold of H.I. (by making you independent of him if you chose to abandon his ship) and thereby make it doubly certain that he would not let you go for want of asking you to stay – and

obviously if he really wants you to stay, stay you must. Consequently I am in no way disappointed or surprised: destiny has fulfilled itself exactly as I foresaw it would if affairs took their normal course.¹⁵

During the period when their correspondence was at its height Shaw had sent her his plays to read, and had written two parts specially for her: the Strange Lady in *The Man of Destiny* and Lady Cicely in *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*. He found writing parts for her daunting and difficult: 'Heaven knows how many plays I shall have to write before I earn one that belongs of divine right to you,' he said to her as early as April 1896.¹⁶ Ellen, in 1899, had other ideas: 'Of course you never *really* meant Lady Cicely for me – but to be published along with other Plays. For delight I'd soonest act your Mrs Warren and Cleopatra. For money I'd choose your *You Never Can Tell*, *The Devil's D*, and *Candida* – (properly acted).'¹⁷ When she read *Candida* in October 1896, she wrote:

I've cried my poor eyes out over your horrid play, your heavenly play. My dear, and now! How can I go out to dinner tonight? I must keep my blue glasses on all the while for my eyes are puffed up and burning. But I can scarce keep from reading it all over again. Henry would not care for that play, I think. I know he would laugh. And that sort of thing makes me hate him sometimes. He would not understand it, the dear, clever silly. *I cant understand what he understands.*¹⁸

Ellen, uncertain of her future at the Lyceum, was anxious only to be loyal – loyal to Irving, loyal to Shaw and all he was trying to tell her about herself and, far behind all this, loyal to her future career, since on this, she now knew, her daughter and her son, and all his children, might well be dependent. Irving naturally resented the attention she paid to Shaw, who wrote to her on March 1897:

Does H. I. really say that you are in love with me? For that be all his sins forgiven him! I will go to the Lyceum again and write an article proving him to be the greatest Richard ever

dreamed of. I am also touched by his refusing to believe that we have never met. No man of feeling *could* believe such heartlessness.¹⁹

Ellen fought a rearguard action in defence of Irving, but conceded points to Shaw all down the line. In September 1896 she wrote: 'He is frightened for everyone but himself, for he has not the ghost of an idea how anyone acts in his theatre, unless he's not in the play.'²⁰ In May 1897, during Shaw's acrimonious discussions with Irving over *The Man of Destiny*, she wrote: 'H and I are out! A little bit. For he dont tell me things about you, because he's vexed always with people who wont agree always and entirely with everything he says, and although I try not to aggravate him by actually *saying* so, I dont agree with him about you, and he knows it. Have you written to him I wonder? Has he written to you? I never *ask* him things.'²¹ And two days later she wrote:

'Be gentle,' you say, 'with H,' I am *always* gentle with him. Better for him if all these years I had acted being something else. It would take too long, and too clever, to tell you the why, but I've spoiled him! I was born meek. (Ugh.) His 'policy of silence' was merely trying to get out of extra trouble, in writing. I do assure you it is *I* all along who wished so hard for the play. He never wishes for anything much outside his own individual effort. I admire him for it, and I hate him for it, that he appreciates NOTHING and NOBODY. You have to poke a play under his nose and read it, and speak of it, and act bits of it, and trouble about it (or rather about his part in it) until you are fagged out, before he'll look at it; and then it takes him a long time to see any good there. But he's worth every trouble, for when once he takes a thing up there's no one like him in mastering the whole affair.

'Gentle!' He wants a good slapping, but *you* must not do that, and *I* wont. I think I'm tired and too indifferent now. It makes me cry to know it, but I'm a patient person.²²

The previous month on 22 April, she had written:

H. is not jealous of me, I remember he once said: 'The best proof of my love for you is that I am not jealous of you.' (Of course you understand he meant 'jealous of the public liking me!'). He astounded me by saying that. As if one *could* be jealous of such a paltry having! As if one *could* do anything but give and give if one had even a little bit of true love! Ah, he makes me tired and sad and hopeless sometimes, and I do expect always the best from him.²³

Yet in December 1897, when Irving was ill, she wrote (and meant):

If you worry (or try to worry) Henry, I must end our long and close friendship. He is ill, and what would I not do to better him?²⁴

But disillusionment with the Lyceum, if not with Irving personally, is apparent in the letters she wrote in 1898. In March she tells Shaw: 'I cant write to you, cant feel, cant think. I work and work but am ill and hate it all.'²⁵ In April, during the preparations for *The Medicine Man*, she says: 'It "lunatics" me to watch Henry at these rehearsals. Hours and hours of loving care over this twaddle! He just *adores* his absurd part.'²⁶ In May 1899, she seems near revolt:

If H.I. gives me only half a fairly good part, I shall play it, but if a part is offered me like the kind of thing I did (or didn't!) in *Peter the Great*, *Medicine Man*, or *Robespierre* I shall 'refuse to act' (for the first time in my life) and give it all up and come and settle quietly in a place like this [Laleham] and perhaps act sometimes on occasions when I could fit in better than another. I should never say good-bye. Just leave off.²⁷

In January 1900, while on tour in America, she admitted again.

My intention (nearly fixed) had been to finish this present tour with H., go back to the Lyceum with him, play there until the Theatre closed in July, and never again to act with H. After a good rest, I should then have announced 'a farewell

tour' on my own account and hope to reap, with about two years' work, enough Corn to provide against a Famine in my old age. (And for my children. I feed them all the while, I assure you. . . .)

In these two years my intention was to provide myself with two or three new plays and re-prepare three old ones and with these 6 to go around the English provinces and through some American and Canadian cities, just saving all the money possible, and then if I lived through it – which I probably should (I'm so tough) – do my best to become a dear old Frump in an arm chair in one of my pretty cottages, and teach Ted's youngest babes to be rather useful and not to trouble about little things.²⁸

She had dragged round North America playing a part in 'this beastly *Robespierre*' which any '£10 per week actress' could have 'played well enough'. But Irving still wanted her for the autumn – 'And, looking at the situation all round, I think I shall come!' She was afraid, she said, of her health failing when she was on her own:

If I did break down the younger people would soon make ducks and drakes of the very moderate sum I have got together by close steady work. I rather dread poverty. My needs are very few; but oh, if I could never help anyone with that *useful stuff*, 'golden ointment', when they were gashed and slashed, in need, it would come very hard to me. . . . Do you call me 'a money-grubber'? A weak, unenterprising, silly fool? An ass? I have not the time, nor the ability, to show you the ins and outs of the whole affair. I appear to be of strange *use* to H., and I have always thought to be *useful*, *really useful* to any one person *is* rather fine and satisfactory.²⁹

The useful actress still, now and for ever.

The same loyalty, the same inability to break away or make a new life for herself, prevailed in her private relations with Irving. In 1898 she learned he was seeing a great deal of Mrs Aria, the

Jewish journalist, and she asked Shaw to find out something about her. Shaw did so, and reported she was 'a good sort'. Her woman's instinct had already sensed she had a rival; in January she wrote from Barkston Gardens: 'Henry is so nice to me lately that I'm convinced he has a new "flame" (he is always nicer then, which I think is to his credit).'³⁰ She did not indulge in frivolous jealousy, only in curiosity: 'But who is Mrs A.? I only know she is "a journalist" and "a friend" of H.I.'s. I never set eyes on her and she had no idea I know of her. (This is fun, and would be better fun, if I knew something about her.) If you know her personally don't "give away" that I know of her existence.'³¹ It is not till November 1900, writing from Liverpool, that she put her position to Shaw once again incontrovertibly:

I feel so certain Henry just hates me! I can only *guess* at it, for he is exactly the same sweet-mannered person he was when 'I felt so certain' Henry loved me! We have not met for years now, except before other people, where my conduct exactly matches his of course. All my own fault. It is *I* am changed, not he. It's all right, but it has squeezed me up dreadfully, and after the long pause of illness, I went back last night, weak and nervous, but looking well and acting well, thank the Lord. Only for the first time not glad to go back to my dear work. I cant speak, you see, so it has been a very tough business. I'm better now, and if I were not a *worm* I'd take my illness as an excuse to outsiders and leave all theatres, Henry, 'and such like trash', behind me and go and live on my farm, but all folk are better working hard, and I know he wants me more than ever in the theatre, so on I go.³²

Her loyalty to Shaw led her to encourage Irving to produce *The Man of Destiny*, though she kept herself clear of the bitter controversy which developed between the two men about this play. Later, she even discussed with Irving the possibility of producing Ibsen's *The Pretenders* at the Lyceum. 'I am sticking at Henry day and night to do Ibsen,' she wrote from Manchester in 1897. The effect on Irving was extraordinary:

The Pretenders! You should hear him (H.I.) on the subject. Lord, Lord! how funny he is, as he tells of one person after another bounding into his rooms and excitedly roaring '*Pretenders*', until at last *he* got excited too, and all aflame, and (declining to join a gathering where extra superfine incense was to be burned before him) buried himself in the play full of hope and belief that here was the Play at last! And how he was left staring before him all through the night wondering was *he* or all his friends stark staring raving mad! I had only said one word on the subject, that he would play the Bishop to utter perfection. *That* fired him! *Brand* and *Borkman* are really the plays for us now, one thing and another considered. You see as long as we 'go one better' than anybody else, what's the good of suggesting anyone knows better than he?³³

She herself, tutored by Shaw, had come to appreciate Ibsen, but she felt neither the Lyceum nor its audiences to be suitable for 'the tremendously powerful *bare* hardness of Ibsen's *Borkman*. As far as the Lyceum goes, it's much too big a theatre to play delicately any of Ibsen's modern plays'.³⁴

In their private relationship Shaw made it quite clear at the outset that he did not want to be considered a conventional admirer, a solid, ever-present lover. He wanted, he said in October 1896, to be used:

I am not to be your lover, nor your friend; for a day of reckoning comes for both love and friendship. You would soon feel like the Wandering Jew: you would know that you *must* get up and move on. You must enter into an inexorably interested relation with me. My love, my friendship, are worth nothing. Nothing for nothing. I must be *used*, built into the solid fabric of your life as far as there is any usable brick in me, and thrown aside when I am used up. It is only when I am being used that I can feel my own existence, enjoy my own life. All my love affairs end tragically because the women *cant* use me. They lie low and let me imagine things about them; but in the end a frightful unhappiness, an unspeakable weariness comes;

and the Wandering Jew must go on in search of someone who can use him to the utmost of his capacity. Everything real in life is based on *need*: just so far as you need me I have you tightly in my arms; beyond that I am only a luxury, and, for luxuries, love and hate are the same passion.³⁵

He did not want what he now felt to be the one great love of his life to decline into the empty philandering to which he had become so used. In the same letter he adds:

And now as to all my love affairs. One is just perishing under a bad attack of the Wandering Jew. Then there is my Irish lady with the light green eyes and the million of money, whom I have got to like so much that it would be superfluous to fall in love with her. Then there is Janet, who, on hearing of the Irish rival, first demanded, with her husband to witness my testimony, whether I still loved her, and then on receiving the necessary assurance, relented and informed me that she had been faithless to me (with the said husband) to the extent of making Candida impossible until after next February, when she expects to become once more a mother. And then there are others whom I cannot recollect just at present, or whom you don't know anything about. And finally there is Ellen, to whom I vow that I will try hard not to spoil my high regard, my worthy respect, my deep tenderness, by any of those philandering follies which make me so ridiculous, so troublesome, so vulgar with women. I swear it. Only, do as you have hitherto done with so wise an instinct: keep out of my reach. You see, nobody can write exactly as I write: my letters will always be a little bit original; but personally I shouldn't be a bit original. All men are alike with a woman whom they admire. You must have been admired so much and so often – must know the symptoms so frightfully well. But now that I come to think of it, so have I. Up to the time I was 29, actually twenty-nine, I was too shabby for any woman to tolerate me. I stalked about in a decaying green coat, cuffs trimmed with the scissors, terrible boots, and so on. Then I got a job to do and bought a

suit of clothes with the proceeds. A lady immediately invited me to tea, threw her arms round me, and said she adored me. I permitted her to adore, being intensely curious on the subject. Never having regarded myself as an attractive man, I was surprised; but I kept up appearances successfully. Since that time, whenever I have been left alone in a room with a female, she has invariably thrown her arms round me and declared she adored me. It is fate. Therefore beware. If you allow yourself to be left alone with me for a single moment, you will certainly throw your arms round me and declare you adore me; and I am not prepared to guarantee that my usual melancholy forbearance will be available in your case.³⁶

Later, in September 1897, he was to warn her again:

It is not the small things that women miss in me, but the big things. My pockets are always full of the small change of love-making; but it is magic money, not real money. Mrs Webb, who is a remarkably shrewd woman, explains her freedom from the fascination to which she sees all the others succumb by saying 'You cannot fall in love with a sprite; and Shaw is a sprite in such matters, not a real person.' Perhaps you can divine the truth in this: I am too lazy to explain it now, even if I understood it. It is certainly true: I am fond of women (or one in a thousand, say); but I am in earnest about quite other things. To most women one man and one lifetime make a world. I require whole populations and historical epochs to engage my interests seriously and make the writing machine (for that is what G.B.S. is) work at full speed and pressure: love is only diversion and recreation to me. Doubtless, dear Ellen, you've observed that you cant act things perfectly until you have got beyond them and so have nothing to fear from them. That's why the women who fall in love with me worry me and torment me and makes scenes (which they cant act) with me and suffer misery and destroy their health and beauty, whilst you, who could do without me as easily as I do without Julia (for instance) are my blessing and refuge, and really

care more for *everybody* (including myself) than Julia cared for me. It is also, alas! why I act the lover so diabolically well that even the women who are clever enough to understand that such a person as myself might exist, cant bring themselves to believe that I am that person. My *impulses* are so prettily played – oh, you know: you wretch, you’ve done it often enough yourself.³⁷

It was mainly for these reasons that he determined from the first that Ellen and he should not meet. He wrote as early as 25 September 1896:

Very well, you shant meet me in the flesh if you’d rather not. There is something deeply touching in that. Did you *never* meet a man who could bear meeting and knowing? Perhaps you’re right: Oscar Wilde said of me: ‘An excellent man: he has no enemies; and none of his friends like him.’ And that’s quite true: they dont like me; but they are my friends, and some of them love me. If you value a man’s regard, *strive* with him. As to *liking*, you like your newspaper, and despise it.³⁸

He was often to regret this decision: ‘Still I have to dream of my Ellen and never touch her,’ he wrote in June the following year.³⁹ But by November 1900, when Ellen had written that she was concerned Irving ‘just hates me’, Shaw could reply:

Of course he hates you when you talk to him about me. Talk to him about himself: then he will love you, to your great alarm. I know what it is to be loved. Good heavens! You are a thousand times right to keep me out of reach of your petticoats. What people call love is impossible except as a joke (and even then one of the two is sure to turn serious) between two strangers meeting accidentally at an inn or in a forest path. Why, I dare not for my life’s happiness make love to my own wife. A delusion, Ellen, all this love romance: that way madness lies.⁴⁰

Shaw’s understanding of a love relationship was of precisely

the kind to which Ellen was best able to respond. Of this 'true love' he wrote to her in September 1896 (his place of writing, the London Underground):

Before the world I must deal sincerely with you, however light a turn I may give my sincerity. I owe that to your dignity as an artist and to my profession. But in private I only want to please you, which makes me a liar and an actor. But you understand all this; only you are not quite as proud as you should be of the fact that you are a fully self-possessed woman and therefore not really the slave of love. You would not delight in it so if it were not entirely subject to your will, if the abandonment were real abandonment, instead of voluntary, artistic *willed* (and therefore revocable) rapture.⁴¹

He was once more in a train, travelling at midnight to Dorking, when he wrote her one of the most revealing of his letters:

Yes, as you guess, Ellen, I am having a bad attack of you just at present. I am restless; and a man's restlessness always means a woman; and my restlessness means Ellen. And your conduct is often shocking. Today I was wandering somewhere, thinking busily about what I supposed to be high human concerns when I glanced at a shop window, and there you were – oh disgraceful and abandoned – in your 3rd Act Sans-Gêne dress – a mere waistband, laughing wickedly and saying maliciously; 'Look here, restless one, at what you are really thinking about.' How can you look Window and Grove's camera in the face with such thoughts in your head and almost nothing on. You are worse than Lilith, Adam's first wife.

Oh fie, fie, let me get away from this stuff, which you have been listening to all your life, and despise – though indeed, dearest Ellen, these silly longings stir up great waves of tenderness in which there is no guile. . . . That is the worst of letters: I must say something: I cant in pen and ink rest these bruised brains in your lap and unburden my heart with inarticulate cries. When I can think, when I can write, then my ideas fly like

stones: you can never be sure that one of them will not hurt you. My very love gets knit into an infernal intellectual fabric that wounds when I mean it to caress; and when I am tired and foolish I am flat and apparently bored. Sometimes that happens to my articles; and then I am terrified indeed, and must work fiercely to remedy it. When *you* complain, I am terrified another way, thinking that the end has come, for I have only one thing to say to you, and it must get tedious sooner or later. I am particularly tedious at present in this midnight solitary journey, wanting to sleep, and yet to sleep with you. Only do you know what the consequences would be? Well, about to-morrow at noon when the sun would be warm and the birds in full song you would feel an irresistible impulse to fly into the woods. And there, to your great astonishment and scandal, you would be *confined* of a baby that would immediately spread a pair of wings and fly, and before you could rise to catch it it would be followed by another and another and another – hundreds of them, and they would finally catch you up and fly away with you to some heavenly country where they would grow into strong sweetheart sons with whom, in defiance of the prayer-book, you would found a divine race. Would you not like to be the mother of your own grandchildren? If you were my mother – but I have a lot of things to say and we are at Redhill already.⁴²

Later in the year, in September, he is writing: 'I love you soulfully and bodyfully, properly and improperly, every way that a woman can be loved.'⁴³ But within nine months he had married Charlotte, his Irish millionairess, the 'lady with the light green eyes', and Ellen wrote him a brief, magnificent letter of good wishes:

How splendid! What intrepidity to make such a courageous bid for happiness. Into it you both go! Eyes wide open! An example to the world, and may all the gods have you in their keeping.⁴⁴

Yet her expression of love had been no less than his. 'And so

missed answering a single letter of yours.' I take your most precious time, although I dont claim your love . . .⁵⁰

This was the vein of her feeling for Shaw during the two years before he finally made up his mind to marry. As for herself, she told him in May 1897: 'No: you have no rivals. You see I have no lovers, only loves, and I have as many of those as I want, and you are the only one I dont benefit! You do things for me. I do things for them.'⁵¹ When he begged her to send him 'one throb' of her heart, she replied:

'A throb of my heart!' Why you dear little stupid you know I havent such a thing about me, at least if I told you I had, you'd laugh and deny it. I wonder will my half century (due in February) finish me up entirely! And end the 'throb' I *do* still feel at a sound, or, most of all, at a touch. . . . I only feel sort of misty-kind about *you*, and a gently warming-all-over-sensation-of-pleasure when I see your writing, and know that 'by and by', upstairs, I'm going to enjoy you, all to myself, lingeringly and word by word. The woman's voice made my heart 'throb,' or rather stand still, and so would the touch of . . . but I fly from 'throbs' in these days. It is not becoming. It's absurd.

Darling, you are very kind to me. Now dont write again for awhile. I appreciate you and what you do for me very well, but take the time in which you'd be writing to me and rest in it instead. Do nothing for nobody, or rather do that for me! *Rest*, for I know you are tired.

Oh, I am very much yours

E.T.⁵²

In September, she allows herself to dream of love with something of the imagery of a picture by Watts:

A Banquet (Oh lor') yesterday, and today I possess a beautiful scarlet and gold-bound tribute to my virtues, beauty, and talent. What a fool one feels, and how silly it all is, and how kind they all were! I sat there for 3 mortal hours, and thought a good deal about you, all the while they were talking

and talking. I was thinking you were tired, and breaking your back over those commas and stops, and breaking your head. When will your labour pains be over and that babe be born into the world? Off on a bit of magic carpet would I go if I could, and wave my hands over your blessed head, touch your cerise (?) hair gently with my lips, whisper to you I was there, although invisible, that I love you tho' I could not show you how much (one never does!) and then skip back again on my carpet to – this place.⁵³

But such dreams had to fade when Shaw married, though the friendship went on undiminished at least until 1900. The letters became increasingly filled with mutual advice and gossip. Shaw was gaining ground in the theatre while Ellen was losing it. One letter from Shaw, written on 9 November 1913, and excluded from the published correspondence, shows how concerned he was at this time about Ellen's financial position, her need for work and her seemingly endless, self-devouring generosity to Teddy:

Dearest Ellen

You fill me with concern – with dismay. What am I to do or say? It's as if Queen Alexandra came to me and asked me to get her a place as cook-housekeeper, except that I'm not in love with Queen Alexandra. Nobody dare have you in a cast: *you'd* knock it all to pieces. A tiny yacht may throw its mast overboard and end its day quietly and serviceably as a ferry boat; but a battleship can't do that; and you are a battleship. What parts are there that even the most callous youngster who never saw you could offer you in the ordinary routine of theatrical commerce? Matrons at £15 a week or less. And then the agony of learning a part, and being hustled by a producer, and finally overwhelming everyone on the stage by dwarfing them and mopping up every scrap of interest and attention in the house! Can you wonder that we all recoil, and say 'She would be splendid in it'; and then get some estimable mouse who would give no trouble and spread no terror?

Ellen, Ellen, what has become of all the jubilee money? – for you must be in difficulties or you would never be content with minor work. You are not wildly extravagant: you *don't* keep two motor cars and wallow in sables and diamonds. Do you give it all away; or has Teddy a family in every European capital for you to support? Not my business *isn't it*? Then don't harrow my feelings by telling me that you must get engagements instantly. Must we all sink with 50 starving parasites clutching our hair? I have three letters just received from unfortunate people, pitiable people, nice people, whose only refuge is being adopted by me. I must turn savage and thrust them from my plank into the waves or I shall presently be as desperate as they are. So must you. Well, this isn't very consoling, damn me.

If I were you, I should take the Margate Theatre, and set up a school. Teddy's ambition is to be the successor of Sarah Thorne; but as you gave him your forehead without your chin he will never do it: he will only talk and write beautifully about it, and produce nothing but pretty children with stomachs to fill and backs to clothe. You will have to set up the school yourself as you have had to do everything else; and then you can give him parts to play at thirty shillings a week and use up the children for the pantomime. . . .

Ellen, what a world!

Oh, why can't I write a letter that will make you forget your troubles, instead of rubbing them in?

Oh Lord!

Let us tie ourselves together – close – and give some respectable boatman our last shilling to row us out and drop us into the sea.

G.B.S.⁵⁴

When Irving died, Shaw was invited by the *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna to write a tribute to him. The article, plainly of an unusual frankness for what was in effect an obituary, recoiled on Shaw's head once the British Press was made aware of the terms

in which it seemed to have been written – judging from translations of the German text which it quoted Shaw protested in vain, and subsequently published the original English text to show exactly what it was he had originally written. He claimed that Irving's greatest single achievement was to have won social recognition for his profession, symbolized by his knighthood, but he criticized him once more for his utter lack of interest in the modern theatre or in any form of artistry but his own. He recognized the 'force and singularity' of Irving's personality and the skilful elaborations of his stage technique, which turned the defects of his physique and voice into something 'interesting and characteristic', though it also made him the object of vulgar ridicule and mimicry. He was, said Shaw, the victim of his own self-training; Britain, as Shaw reminds his Victorian readers, had no national theatre to give intellectual and artistic stature to its drama and stage presentations. A man of Irving's talents had no standard against which to measure himself, and no school of acting in which he could have learnt to rid himself of the mannerisms which, Shaw claimed, ultimately destroyed his capacity as an actor.

Shaw's article excited so much comment that he was invited to write a sequel on the art of Ellen Terry. This appeared in the *Neue Freie Presse* on 24 December 1905. In this he pointed out the contrast there had been between Ellen and Irving since the time she had come to find 'life more interesting than art' and, though 'the most modern of modern women, the most vital of modern personalities', served out her partnership with Irving 'in the spirit of a thrifty intelligent housekeeper'. For Shaw, she was always more interesting as a personality than as an actress appearing at the Lyceum:

The part she has played in the life of her time will never be known until some day – perhaps fifty years hence – when her correspondence will be collected and published in twenty or thirty volumes. It will then, I believe, be discovered that every famous man of the last quarter of the nineteenth century –

provided he were a playgoer – has been in love with Ellen Terry, and that many of them have found in her friendship the utmost consolation one can hope for from a wise, witty, and beautiful woman whose love is already engaged elsewhere, and whose heart has withstood a thousand attempts to capture it.⁵⁵

'She actually invented her own beauty,' he claims, a beauty of a kind that 'had never been seen in the world before'. She was 'a new and irresistibly attractive specimen of womankind'. In addition, she became 'one of the greatest letter-writers that ever lived. She can flash her thought down on paper in a handwriting that is as characteristic and as unforgettable as her face.'

With a penetration that came from sharing in part a spirit similar to Ellen's, Shaw realized the inner nature of her relationship to other people, and contrasted it with Irving's:

Irving was sentimental and affectionate, and like most sentimental and affectionate people was limited and concentrated in his interests. He never understood others, and indeed never understood himself. Ellen Terry is not sentimental and not affectionate; but she is easily interested in anybody or anything remarkable or attractive: she is intelligent: she understands: she sympathizes because she understands and is naturally benevolent; but she has been interested oftener than deeply touched, and has pitied and helped oftener than loved. With all her ready sacrifice of her stage talent and skill, first to domestic ties, and then, on her return to the stage, to the Lyceum enterprise, she has never really sacrificed her inner self. In sacrificing her art she only sacrificed a part of herself. Irving's art was the whole of himself; and that was why he sacrificed himself – and everybody and everything else – to his art. It is a curious piece of artistic psychology, this, and will be misunderstood by stupid people and Philistines; but one does not write about artists of genius for people who know nothing about genius.⁵⁶

A few months after the publication of this tribute by Shaw,

Ellen was to marry her third husband. The correspondence between her and Shaw more or less ceased, and she lived to see him reach the pinnacle of his great reputation. She never lost her affection for him, and on the scrap of paper found after her death and headed 'My Friends' the name of Bernard Shaw appeared at the head second only to that of Charles Reade.

X



THE SECRET SELF

Only two other actresses of her time, in my opinion – Sarah Bernhardt and Elconora Duse – have ranked with Ellen either as personalities in the theatre or as performers on the stage. During the 1880s all three reached the top in their profession, although Duse was ten years younger than Ellen and twelve years younger than Bernhardt. Eleonora Duse did not appear on the stage in England until 1893. On her second visit in 1895 Shaw, then a dramatic critic, was able to see Ellen, Duse and Bernhardt perform simultaneously in London. The contrast between these three women could not have been more marked if they had been deliberately brought together for the purpose, yet Ellen became the personal friend of both her great rivals. In 1906, Duse travelled all the way from Florence in order just to stand beside Ellen on the occasion of her Jubilee at Drury Lane.

Duse, like Ellen, was born to a couple of strolling players, Vincenzo and Angelica Duse in October 1858. Her grandfather, Luigi Duse, had been a celebrated comedian in the Veneto region in the north of Italy. She was brought up in the theatre, and at the age of six her name appeared on the playbills. While still a child, the parts she played increased in importance; her emotional development was precipitated by the parts she was given, especially Juliet, whom she played at the age of fourteen. She herself seemed to experience directly all the suffering associated with these roles; she made their sorrows her own. At twenty she was fully established, with a naturalistic style of her own which she was prepared to assert against the will of any actor-manager who tried to make her act according to the conventions of the time. She became the mistress of Martino Cafiero, a prominent newspaper proprietor in

Naples who at the age of thirty-five was as famous for his success with women as he was for his artistry and culture. Soon Duse was pregnant.

She gave herself up as completely to her lovers as she did to the characters she impersonated on the stage. When the men she loved, like Cafiero, tired of her or were worn out by her insatiable demands and left her, she could never understand why she had been deserted, and the loss of love sometimes drove her close to suicide. In compensation, she would thrust herself back upon the stage, letting the parts she played express the emotions she felt so intensely. Cafiero's child died shortly after birth; Duse herself carried the small coffin to the grave and watched it sink into the earth in silence. The theatre received her back and helped her to bear her grief. There was another man to whom she could turn, an actor called Tebaldo Chicchi, who loved her with a humble adoration. She married him, and bore him a daughter. But this marriage was a failure; Duse's emotional demands proved too devouring for the kindly, retiring man. It was now that, like Bernhardt, she discovered that she had tuberculosis.

Duse had seen and admired Bernhardt, and in 1884 she added to her repertoire the part of Camille in *The Lady of the Camellias*, the famous melodrama by Dumas fils. She scored a triumph in this part which rivalled that of Bernhardt herself. While on tour she fell in love with the poet and composer Arrigo Boito, who was to become as dear to her as Godwin had been to Ellen. Through him she achieved her ultimate stature as an actress, in 1888, when she triumphed as Shakespeare's Cleopatra in Boito's adaptation of the play. It was not until 1895 that she turned from him to her most famous lover, Gabrielle d'Annunzio. Meanwhile she toured the Americas and Europe, playing such parts as Juliet, Camille and even Nora in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. In 1893 she visited America in the wake of Bernhardt and Ellen. She did not enjoy the experience; her work was not fully understood, and she was in low spirits when she finally arrived in London during May. English audiences, too, were slow to respond to her particular style; her subtle quietude and intense concentration made little

impression on playgoers who were used to being captured by assault. When she returned in 1895, however, they proved far more receptive. Within a square mile of London, the three greatest actresses of Europe were at work: Ellen at the Lyceum, Duse at Drury Lane, and Bernhardt at Daly's Theatre. The visitors were vying with each other: both were appearing as Camille in *The Lady of the Camellias* and as Magda in Sudermann's *Heimat*.¹

For Shaw there was no doubt at all which of the visiting actresses he preferred. He found Bernhardt on the stage a purveyor of fake enchantment, each detail of her complexion applied with calculated art:

Every dimple has its dab of pink; and her finger-tips are so delicately incarnadined that you fancy they are transparent like her ears, and that the light is shining through their delicate blood-vessels. Her lips are like a newly painted pillar box; her cheeks, right up to the languid lashes, have the bloom and surface of a peach; she is beautiful with the beauty of her school, and entirely inhuman and incredible. But the incredibility is pardonable, because, though it is all the greatest nonsense, nobody believing in it, the actress herself least of all, it is so artful, so clever, so well recognized a part of the business, and carried off with such a genial air, that it is impossible not to accept it with a good-humour. . . . She does not enter into the leading character; she substitutes herself for it.²

Duse seemed to him to be as intensely real as Bernhardt was unnatural:

When she comes on the stage, you are quite welcome to take your opera-glass and count whatever lines time and care have so far traced on her. They are the credentials of her humanity; and she knows better than to obliterate that significant handwriting beneath a layer of peach-bloom from the chemist's. . . . I grant that Sarah's elaborate Monna Lisa smile, with the conscious droop of the eyelashes and the long carmined lips coyly

disclosing the brilliant row of teeth, is effective of its kind – that it not only appeals to your susceptibilities, but positively jogs them. And it lasts quite a minute, sometimes longer. But Duse, with a tremor of the lip which you feel rather than see, and which lasts half an instant, touches you straight on the very heart; and there is not a line in the face, or a cold tone in the gray shadow that does not give poignancy to that tremor. . . . The truth is that in the art of being beautiful, Madame Bernhardt is a child beside her. . . . Duse produces the illusion of being infinite in variety of beautiful pose and motion. Every idea, every shade of thought and mood, expresses itself delicately but vividly to the eye; and yet, in an apparent million of changes and inflections, it is impossible to catch any line of an awkward angle, or any strain interfering with the perfect abandonment of all the limbs to what appears to be their natural gravitation towards the finest grace.

Duse acknowledged that she suffered with her characters. 'I do not paint my face,' she said, 'I make myself up morally. When I come before the public, my first success is one of ugliness. What difference does it make? I can be beautiful when I want to be.' 'To play,' she once wrote to a critic who had helped her, 'if it were only playing! – I feel I have *never known* and *never will know how to play*. Those poor women of my dramas have so entered my heart and head . . . I'm not concerned if they've lied, betrayed or sinned. . . . Provided I feel they have wept – have suffered for lying, betraying or for loving – I am *with them* and *for them*. . . .' With Bernhardt it was artificial effects which counted – her coloured nails, her jewelled fingers, her spellbound eyes, her drawling 'golden' voice, either gliding smooth and slow or working up to a crescendo. Duse's art was fed by her experience of life, and she portrayed states of emotion of which she seemed to have more than mortal knowledge. She used her body, and especially her hands, to convey the anguish of the spirit in a single gesture, her deepest feeling nakedly revealed in a movement or a glance. Ellen's art lay in its expression of simpler human feeling –

to achieve this with naturalism and ease she gave the greatest care and study to every part, however far it fell beneath the true level of her talents. Her art was neither haunted, like Duse's, nor decorative, like Bernhardt's. It was delicate and lyrical, as generous and human as herself.

For Ellen, these two actresses, though rivals to each other, were in her sight her admired friends.³ This is her impression first of Bernhardt and then of Duse on the stage:

How wonderful she looked in those days! She was as transparent as an azalea, only more so; like a cloud, only not so thick. Smoke from a burning paper describes her more nearly! She was hollow-eyed, thin, almost consumptive-looking. Her body was not the prison of her soul, but its shadow.

It is this extraordinary decorative and symbolic quality of Sarah's which makes her transcend all personal and individual feeling on the stage. No one plays a love scene better, but it is a *picture* of love that she gives, a strange exotic picture rather than a suggestion of the ordinary human passion as felt by ordinary human people. She is exotic – well, what else should she be? One does not, at any rate one should not, quarrel with an orchid and call it unnatural because it is not a buttercup or a cowslip.

I have spoken of the face as the chief equipment of the actor. Sarah Bernhardt contradicts this at once. Her face does little for her. Her walk is not much. Nothing about her is more remarkable than the way she gets about the stage without one ever seeing her move. By what magic does she triumph without two of the richest possessions that an actress can have? Eleonora Duse has them. Her walk is the walk of the peasant, fine and free. She has the superb carriage of the head which goes with that fearless movement from the hips. And her face! There is nothing like it, nothing! But it is as the real woman, a particular woman, that Duse triumphs most. Her Cleopatra was insignificant compared with Sarah's. She is not so pictorial.

On the fly-leaves of her lecture notes, written after a lifetime

of reflection and practice, Ellen summarized her thoughts about acting:

Get the words into your remembrance first of all. Then (as you have to convey the meaning of the words to *some* who have ears, but don't hear, and eyes, but don't see) put the words into the simplest vernacular. Then exercise your judgment about their sound.

So many different ways of speaking words! Beware of sound and fury signifying nothing. Voice, unaccompanied by imagination, dreadful. Pomposity, rotundity. Imagination and intelligence absolutely necessary to realize and portray high and low imaginings. Voice, yes, but not mere production. You must have a sensitive ear, and a sensitive judgment of the effect on your audience. But all the time you must be trying to please *yourself*.

Get yourself into *tune*. Then you can let fly your imagination, and the words will seem to be supplied by yourself. Shakespeare supplied by oneself! Oh! Realism? Yes, if we mean by that real feeling, real sympathy. But people seem to mean by it only the realism of low-down things.

To act, you must make the thing written your own. You must steal the words, steal the thought, and *convey* the stolen treasure to others with great art.⁴

Ellen had reached her position of eminence during a period which saw the virtual transformation of British society. During her lifetime the population of Britain doubled; it was barely 20 million when she was born, and over 1½ million were paupers living on relief. London, with around 2 million inhabitants, was expanding rapidly, and there was a severe cholera epidemic in 1849, the year after her birth, with over 13,000 dying during the summer. There was another outbreak in 1865, leading to the introduction of new regulations covering public health.

Ellen's earlier life, therefore, was spent during the mid-Victorian period of expansion and reform. While the Terry family were living the simple, almost primitive life of strolling players, the

nation to which they belonged was creating an economy which was to make Britain a centre for world trade and at the same time introducing the reforms which are the foundation of our modern society. Exports trebled between 1850 and 1870. But the Victorians engaged in the expansion of industry were materialists who saw their drive and ruthless initiative as an outcome of their firmly-entrenched Christian beliefs, as expressed through the teaching of the various sects. They allied their conscience with their material progress, promoting missionary work among the heathen and believing themselves and their society the most powerful and God-fearing on earth. The new rich were essentially philistine (as Matthew Arnold was among the first to point out) and faced men and women of taste with a hard crust of indifference to any aspect of art and culture which did not seem to reflect their wealth, power and piety. Many of them were among the regular patrons of Irving's lavish productions at the Lyceum. Conspicuous comfort, not beauty, characterized the architecture and furnishing of the period. It was this that Ellen, under Godwin's influence, resisted with such fervour. Poverty, though relieved by the exercise of charity, was despised as the visitation of God for the most part on the idle and unemployable. Yet the latter part of the nineteenth century saw the introduction of many much-needed reforms in conditions of employment and housing, as well as in public health and education. Ellen, as compassionate as she was generous, gave lavishly to people in distress, and visited the poverty-stricken areas of London. But she did not sweep in like some grand lady bent on dispensing charity. She would stop and talk to the ragged children in the streets as if they were members of her family.

At the head of this ebullient and thrusting nation presided a woman, Queen Victoria, who, after an initial period when the monarchy was frequently under bitter attack, became from the 1860s an emotional symbol for her people. This new feeling for the Queen made the Golden Jubilee of 1887 and the Diamond Jubilee of 1897 occasions for a glittering celebration of imperial splendour, and established the modern, more sentimental, response

of the British people to the Royal Family. There was no doubt about the loyalty and affection felt by both Irving and Ellen for the Queen and the Prince of Wales.

Yet the nineteenth century was still a period of grave restrictions on the rights of women, who remained throughout second-class citizens. They had only one main object in life: marriage, the management of a husband's home under his more or less stern eye, and the bearing and upbringing of his children. As Florence Nightingale wrote in 1851: 'Women don't consider themselves as human beings at all. There is absolutely no God, no country, no duty to them at all, except family . . . I know nothing like the petty grinding tyranny of a good English family. And the only alleviation is that the tyrannized submits with a heart full of affection.' It was through marriage, and marriage alone, that a woman achieved social status; her only legal status was as an adjunct to her husband. If she were a middle-class or upper-class girl, her education was designed to make her attractive to men so that she might, as soon as suitable, be asked in marriage. Clever and exceptionally well-informed women were not generally popular with either sex; they were labelled 'blue stockings', which meant they should be avoided socially. The spinster who did not achieve a man or by some misadventure lost one became an object of pity and even ridicule, with little or no opportunity to find herself interesting employment; she became a governess, perhaps, helping to raise the children of women who had been more fortunate than herself. The exploitation of timid and ill-paid 'gentlewomen' who obtained positions as governesses became notorious, all the more so because they were often quite unqualified for the work. Ellen was in most respects a model employer of her many grades of domestic help; she was, in fact, indulgent to a fault until in old age and failing health she became more difficult.

Most married women, though their social status was assured and often powerful, had to endure the prolonged period of child-bearing which seemed right and natural in Victorian society. It was only to be expected that some of a woman's children would be stillborn or die prematurely, and large families were the only

insurance against the poor health of the period. The risks and pains of childbirth were great (they were, indeed, regarded as part of the will of God), and it was only when Queen Victoria asked for chloroform during two of her confinements that the use of anaesthetics, available to pregnant women by the 1840s, became accepted by married couples with more advanced views.⁵

Once she accepted marriage a woman ceased to exist in law separately from her husband. All her property was immediately merged with his and could be disposed of as he willed; if she earned money, as a writer, for example, or as an actress, he could claim it, even if he had deserted her, and he could take the children of the marriage from her if they were separated. But Ellen's children, being illegitimate, were never legally tied to Godwin, and even when Ellen married Kelly and became Mrs Wardell, the children, though taking the name of Wardell, did not, of course, come under Kelly's full legal control. However, Ellen's possessions and earnings technically became his property, and after their separation she was not only being generous but also formally correct in sending him money for his support.

Yet Ellen's household, with or without a man in residence, was utterly untypical of the period. The great Victorian middle-class family with a flock of children, unattached relatives, and staffs of ill-paid servants, was normally ruled by the pater familias in the spirit of sectarian religion. If the pater familias were a man of goodwill and affection, he became the centre of an admiring flock of playful daughters and rather more distantly respectful sons. If he were harsh or tyrannical, the family would live in dread of his arrival home in the evening, his disciplinary administration alleviated only by the submissive affection of his wife, unless she too became a tyrant. Discipline was only too often punitive, with constant caning and flogging of children both at home and in the schools. What was important was that the family unit should be maintained by law, and every item of possession lay ultimately in the hands of the head of the household.

For the young Victorian girl sewing and letter-writing to

friends and relatives became a consuming pastime; the arrival of the penny post in 1840 encouraged the endless exchange of confidences through correspondence. She might also learn sketching and elocution, music and singing to enhance her social attractions, and she probably kept a more or less secret diary. Enterprising mothers introduced their daughters to household management and economy, and many books were published to show how to make the best of lower middle-class incomes of £200 and £300 a year. Mrs Beeton, whose celebrated cookery book appeared in 1861, was the wife of Samuel Beeton, the editor of a household journal for women, *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, which was first published in 1852. If a young lady had a taste for outdoor exercise she would learn how to ride side-saddle, skate, play croquet, or, later in the period, run long-skirted round the tennis-courts. As for other amusements, there were always fashionable balls in the season, for which she had to learn how to dance, as well as theatres, concerts, exhibitions and the many popular shows of the period. There was no shortage of 'pastimes' for her, provided she could persuade her father to pay whatever it might cost to indulge in them.

But the fact always remained that she was a dependant – first on her father and then, if she married, on her husband. Until the passing of the Married Women's Property Act in 1881, when Ellen was thirty-six, no married women could own property, though they could benefit under a trust. The law came just in time to help Ellen when she was receiving what was probably the highest salary earned by a woman in Britain during the late nineteenth century – £200 a working week, together with lump sums acquired from benefit performances.

It was, therefore, during Ellen's lifetime that women in Britain achieved the right to a basic formal education (Ellen herself, as we have seen, had had none), the right to own property, the right to divorce undesirable husbands, and in 1918, when she was over seventy, the right to vote. Ellen herself took no militant part in supporting women's rights, but she exemplified in her own way of life how utterly independent a woman of character could become.

She was used from childhood to earning (though not owning) money, and free almost entirely from the sense of economic dependence on men which other women either accepted or endured. It is true that her brief retirement from the stage during her marriage to Watts and her alliance with Godwin made her temporarily dependent, but she always knew that she could return to the stage and support herself and later on her children as well. And this in fact she did, earning a handsome income throughout the 1880s and 1890s which made her at that time a very rich woman. Her position, however, changed radically in the early years of the new century.

At the time of Irving's death, Ellen had been playing in *Alice-sit-by-the-Fire*, the play specially written for her by James Barrie, who was already well-established as a novelist and dramatist with such plays as *The Little Minister* (1847), *Quality Street* and *The Admirable Crichton* (both 1902) and *Peter Pan* (1904). His instinct for dramatic effect combined with his impish sentimentality was everything that the more comfortable theatre-goers wanted at the turn of the century; it reassured them at a time when the society they most valued was being eroded or re-examined by the newer writers and dramatists such as Ibsen, Shaw, Harley Granville-Barker (*The Voyage Inheritance* 1905) and John Galsworthy (*The Silver Box* 1906).

Barrie, the son of a handloom-weaver in Forfarshire, was forty years of age in 1900. Irving had considered producing *The Professor's Love Story*, one of Barrie's earlier plays, at the Lyceum, but had finally rejected it, as he so often rejected the work of contemporary dramatists, because he found it lacked the scale and *panache* which he needed to satisfy his theatrical instinct. Ellen herself had first made Barrie's acquaintance when she had written to him to say how much she had enjoyed his story, *Sentimental Tommy*. Their friendship was to be lifelong.

In 1906 Ellen, at the age of fifty-nine, was honoured by the profession with a great Jubilee performance on 12 June at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. She had been on the stage for fifty years, almost half of which she had spent with Irving. The general

committee sponsoring the performance was made up of over a hundred names representing the nobility and men of distinction in every branch of public life. The executive committee, whose chairman was Arthur Pinero, all came from the theatrical profession. Both these committees were composed entirely of men.⁶

Had Irving lived to appear beside her, his own fiftieth anniversary would have occurred in the same year. It would have been an occasion unequalled in English theatrical history. As it was, with Ellen standing alone to receive the homage of those who loved her as fellow-players and as members of her public, the occasion was extraordinary. It began before noon and lasted until past six o'clock. It was, she said herself, a 'mammoth matinée'. Duse, as we have seen, came from Florence to be present at the reception with which the programme of nearly twenty items concluded. Caruso, accompanied by Tosti, sang for her; so did her friend from the music halls, Gertie Miller. Réjane came from France, and Coquelin and his son appeared in a scene from Molière's *Le Mariage Forcé*. W. S. Gilbert presented *Trial by Jury*, his production crowded with celebrities from the theatre and the arts; the Jury alone included Conan Doyle, Comyns-Carr and Anthony Hope. A series of twelve *Tableaux Vivants* was presented by over fifty actresses, among them Mrs Tree, Mrs Langtry, Kate Rorke, Violet and Irene Vanbrugh, Ellaline Terriss, Gertrude Elliot, Constance Collier, Lillian Braithwaite, Lena Ashwell and Julia Neilson. Seymour Hicks and 'all the Bath Buns' appeared in a scene from *The Beauty of Bath*. Mrs Patrick Campbell and Lewis Waller recited. Sir Charles Wyndham offered a scene from *The School for Scandal*, and the 'Leading Comedians of London' gave a Minstrel Entertainment. Ellen herself appeared as Beatrice in the first act of *Much Ado About Nothing*, with Beerbohm Tree as Benedick and Forbes-Robertson as Claudio. The scenery was designed by Gordon Craig, and every available member of the Terry family joined in this performance - Fred as Don Pedro, Marion as Hero, Kate as Ursula, and many of the younger generations (including Edy and Kate Terry Gielgud, and Gordon

Craig's children, Rosemary, Robin and Peter) appeared as dancers, torch-bearers and pages. Gordon Craig's masked dance concluded the scene, and a host of famous names joined the Terrys to fill the stage with movement and colour, among them Henry Ainley, Gerald du Maurier, Harcourt Williams, Matheson Lang and H. V. Esmond. In the cast itself both Irving's sons were featured, together with Henry Neville, Oscar Asche and Edmund Gwenn. This great assembly of artists, whose combined careers were to span over a century of active work on the English stage, had never been matched in one single performance. The sum raised for Ellen was nearly £6,000. She was by now in some need of money.⁷

The draft of Ellen's speech survives written in her bold handwriting. She began by saying: 'I will not say goodbye – It is one of my chief joys today that I *need* not say goodbye – just yet – but can still speak to you as one who is still among you on the active list – Still in your service – if you please.'⁸

The only significant absence from the Jubilee was that of Gordon Craig, who was in Berlin. He wrote in his old age that he had resented the whole affair at the time:

Somehow this Jubilee thoroughly upset me – because my father, E.W.G., was forgot – like the Hobby-horse! My father, my master and I, all loved the same woman – and we all left her for the same reason – a commonplace one: our work called to us, and we went. But we did love her. Strange, it was she who could not follow us. My father died in 1886, my master in 1905, and I still live on – older now than they were when they died. Both died tired out. Of us three, my master was the greatest man. Both he and my father did more for her than ever I did: yet I believe she loved me most: how strange. I alone live on now to write of this. I older than all three. It seems queer to me: it seems all wrong: but as it is an old story, ever being retold and rehearsed, it can hardly be quite all wrong. I was the least of the three, the weakest and the smallest: is that why she loved me most? Yes and no: for in loving me so much she loved my father at the same time.⁹

After it was all over, Ellen had to face a regular evening performance at the Court Theatre. She says she did not feel sad; she was not, as she noted in her speech, retiring from the stage. Referring to her own performance at Drury Lane, she wrote: 'I believe I played Beatrice as joyfully as at any time in my life. . . . there being no sadness of farewell in this commemoration of my Jubilee.' But with the audience dispersed and the players hastening away to their various dressing-rooms in other theatres in London, Ellen was finally left alone with Edy. The stage-door keeper called up a four-wheeler to take them to the Court in Sloane Square. When they left there was still a crowd outside to raise a cheer for Ellen.

The play in which she was appearing at the Court was Shaw's *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*. Ellen's talent had at last yielded to Shaw's ten-year siege. After the single copyright performance she had undertaken for him while on tour in Liverpool in October of that year, just before leaving for America, she undertook to play Lady Cicely Waynflete, the part he had originally written for her in 1899, and which she had found, after all, she 'adored'. Now, in 1906, it was she who was in search of suitable characters to play. On 20 March she had appeared in the first of a series of six matinées devoted to Shaw's play which, to her surprise, developed the following month into a full twelve-week season. She was sufficiently pleased with the result to present the play subsequently on tour both in Britain and in the United States. This colourful piece, though certainly not Shaw at his best, nevertheless had wit, style, and an exotic setting in North Africa; it also offered a fashionably pro-feminine theme, and an admirable male part for a comedian in the Cockney seaman, Drinkwater. Ellen could scarcely fail as the all-charming disposer of men's lives and morals, but the London season was only barely successful. She and Shaw had better fortune with the play in the provinces and the United States.

In the cast for *Captain Brassbound's Conversion* at the Court was an American actor, James Carew. He was of German-Jewish origin, and had changed his real name, which was Usselman.

According to Shaw, an enthralled spectator now safely married, Ellen took one glance at this actor who had been engaged to play the minor part of the American Captain Kearney, and claimed him for her own, though he was so many years her junior: 'So swift a decision by a huntress who, far from being promiscuous in her attachments, was highly fastidious, made me marvel and say to myself "There, but for the grace of God, goes Bernard Shaw"'.¹⁰

Carew, like Kelly, was another plain, honest and handsome man. Born in Indiana during the 1870s, he had seen Ellen and Irving perform in Chicago, and determined as a result to go on the stage. He made his way to England, and after some hard work shaping his modest talent, he had first appeared at the Court in 1905 as Hector Malone in Shaw's *Man and Superman*. Overwhelmed by the attentions of this famous and beautiful actress, he became a constant visitor both at King's Road and Smallhythe. A sentence in a letter from Shaw written on 16 March 1906, four days before the opening of the play, gives his view of the situation: 'I am furiously jealous of Carew, with whom you fell in love at first sight.'

The following year Ellen took him with her to America as her leading man, her Captain Brassbound, and on 22 March, a year after she had first met him, she married him secretly in Pittsburg. She kept her marriage concealed from everyone, and especially from Edy, but she wrote to Shaw a fortnight or so later - 'James Carew goes on trying and striving and acts better and better every week. He is a splendid fellow and adores you, *and me!*' Ellen returned to London during the summer as Mrs James Carew, and the family struggles began afresh.

The relationship between Edy and her mother had become involved and difficult, though Ellen adored her daughter: Teddy had gone his own way, leaving his mother to shoulder many of his responsibilities. Now that Irving was dead, the great masculine prop of her life was gone and she felt an ageing but still attractive woman's need for the presence of a strong man who would be prepared to cherish her. Carew, a supporting actor suddenly elevated to the position of a leading man, found that he was also

to be cast as a supporting husband. He loved her as well as any man in his thirties can love a beautiful woman in her late fifties. But it would seem he had not reckoned with marrying her, and it was only on her insistence that he consented to do so. She wanted, she said, to avoid any more gossip attaching itself to her name.

But, consciously or unconsciously, there seems little doubt that Ellen felt she needed this kindly man's protection from the complications with which her daughter sought to surround her. Edy expressed violent resentment whenever her mother showed any inclination for male company. Her aggressive and domineering nature was the very opposite of Ellen's, whose interest in people and events increased rather than lessened with age. Ellen, who was used to the admiration of men and women who occupied the highest and most responsible positions in society and culture, appreciated increasingly the value of her male friends, more especially as her self-fulfilment in the theatre decreased. These closer friends, in addition to Stephen Coleridge, Sir Albert Seymour and Graham Robertson, included Norman Forbes and Tom Heslewood.¹¹ Edy resented these friendships as an intrusion upon the in-growing devotion of mother and daughter.

Ellen in her fifties and Edy in her thirties loved and quarrelled with equal fervour. Their life, though sometimes idyllic, was also one of recurrent rows and reconciliations. Then Edy began to acquire intimate women friends whose society she wanted to impose upon her mother. The foremost of these friends was Christabel Marshall. Chris, according to Marguerite Steen, who knew her, liked to be thought the illegitimate daughter of the Victorian novelist, Emma Marshall, though she was in fact quite securely legitimate. She was a cultured girl with a gift for writing, but she suffered from an embarrassing impediment of speech which had an effect on her pronunciation similar to that which is caused by a cleft palate. She fell deeply in love with Edy, and gave both her and her mother a lifelong, but demanding, devotion. When she eventually joined the Catholic Church, she changed her name to Christopher St John.

It was as a young girl in 1890 that she had first seen Ellen on

the stage at the Prince's Theatre, Bristol and, in her own words, 'forthwith fallen in love with her'. She was among the many promising young people to whose ardour Ellen responded with friendly letters, though she did not meet her until 1896. With her heart thumping she was swept by Sally Holland from the stage-door of the Lyceum up the stairs into Ellen's dressing-room, 'inhaling for the first time in my life the air of a theatre, backstage, air laden with the aroma of rope, canvas, glue, size, grease-paint and, at this period, gas'. There she found Ellen, swathed in an old grey flannel dressing-gown, vigorously washing her face before making up. It was her first sight of Ellen's passion for cleanliness. Ellen, drying her face with a rough towel, told her not to wear her heart upon her sleeve; this referred to the ardour of her letters, but she followed this almost immediately by complimenting her on her cleverness. 'I never read a letter from you without wishing I had had a better education,' she said.

A woman, whom she had at first thought to be Ellen, had swept past her as she entered the dressing-room. The play to be performed was *King Arthur*, and the girl was dressed for Guinevere. But her eyes, unlike Ellen's, were dark. This was Edy dressed to double for Ellen in the Prologue. Chris was allowed to watch the play from the wings.

She did not meet Ellen again for three years, when, after a period of study at Oxford, she was working in London as a secretary and journalist. She then paid a second visit to Ellen in a theatre in Fulham, and found herself in the care of Edy, who was mending a mitten. As she shook hands, Edy's needle pricked her. 'Cupid's dart,' wrote Chris, 'for I loved Edy from that moment.' She was invited to a midnight meal at Barkstone Gardens, where she enjoyed kidneys specially grilled at table by Ellen herself in a chafing-dish, followed by creamed rice and 'superb Mocha coffee'.

Chris was working intermittently as secretary to Lady Randolph Churchill and her son Winston. The following day, Edy stood waiting outside the Churchill residence in Great Cumberland Place to take her out to lunch. She describes her at this period:

She had not yet reached her thirtieth birthday, but in her dark hair, nearer black than brown, there was already one white lock. Her brown eyes, set wide apart, were perhaps the most beautiful feature of her face. The nose was rather too long, though its upward tilt deceived one about that. The straight lips were a fault in her mouth, which otherwise was very like her mother's. She had a lovely slender figure in these days, and looked taller than she was (about 5ft. 8in.) owing to her elevation. Her carriage was perfect in its grace. . . . In repose she was as graceful as in movement. . . . Edy's control of her limbs might not have been so remarkable if she had not been trained as a fencer and a dancer. Edy had a beautiful voice 'quite her own, unlike anyone else's', Bernard Shaw, who once engaged her for a part on the strength of it, limited himself to saying. How wise, for a voice eludes description. Warm, mellow, deep, resonant give only faint clues to what Edy's voice was like. It had a penetrating timbre, rather like that of an oboe.¹²

In the autumn of 1899, while Ellen was touring in the United States with Irving, Edy and Chris started their life together in Smith Square, Westminster. They were to remain there for six years, though on Chris's own admission, there was at one time a grave crisis in their relationship:

This first phase in my long friendship with Edy cannot be epitomized as an idyll. It came near to being a tragedy. Of that Edy never spoke in after years. I think our life together subsequently was all the happier, because we did not break open the grave of a thing past which had threatened to separate us.

This was a reference to one of Edy's unhappy attempts to achieve a normal love affair. This, we have seen, occurred during the fifth American tour, when Edy accompanied her mother and fell in love with an American painter, Joe Evans, of whom Ellen for some reason disapproved. Ellen, as she sometimes did when

she had worked herself up to do so, asserted her full authority, which seemed all the more harsh because of the serious distress it caused her. This opposition, whether well- or ill-considered, only served to increase Edy's sense of frustration, and force her to find consolation in the devotion of the friend whose torturing jealousy was raised by this threat of marriage.

Edy, like her brother, was seldom to achieve economic independence from her mother. Although Gordon Craig was making some money on the Continent, he left his wife and family in England unsupported, and Ellen assumed the responsibility of paying his alimony. She was also responsible for supporting Edy's small business as a theatrical costumier. In return, Edy gave her mother a form of affection which became increasingly 'protective'. The situation is described frankly by Chris:

Edy's devotion to her mother was not manifest to everyone. To me it became clearer and clearer as time went on that she loved her mother more deeply, more entirely, than anyone else. It was a maternal love. Often when I was with them, Edy seemed to me the wise mother, and Ellen Terry the wayward child. A child Edy would not spoil. 'She doesn't spoil me,' Ellen Terry wrote to Shaw, 'but let anyone try to hurt me! Murder then, if it would save me.' I am convinced now that Edy always acted in her mother's interests, and that her separate ménage with me, far from separating them, brought them into a closer relationship. . . . She did not grudge me my place in Edy's life and love, and soon gave me one in her own. This was perhaps the happiest period in my long friendship with Edy. The period when I was a member of Ellen Terry's company first at the Imperial Theatre, later on tours in the provinces and America. The period when I became Ellen's literary henchman, and helped her to write her memoirs.

Ellen gave them a small cottage, Priest's House, in Smallhythe, which formed part of her property and was situated a hundred yards or so from her own farmhouse.

This initial period of close and friendly relationship – which

included Chris's editorial work on Ellen's book *The Story of My Life*, which was published by Hutchinson in 1908 – was ruptured by Ellen's sudden and secret marriage. As Chris says:

This lovely, pleasant carefree period came to an end, shortly after the celebration of Ellen Terry's jubilee, with her third marriage. Edy was blamed for the estrangement from her mother which ensued, but could the whole sad story of it be told, she would be vindicated by an impartial judge. She lost many friends at this time. We grew accustomed to being ostracized.

That Ellen was concerned about Edy and her career is evident in her correspondence with Shaw. ('I wish you'd marry her,' she writes in October 1896. 'Nobody else will. The ninnies are frightened at her!') In a letter of troubled and penetrating analysis written on 4 November, she tries to understand her daughter:

Edy *looks* a tragedy, and is about the most amusing, funniest creature living, a casual wretch. Oh she is odd. . . . She says she could not live with any set of people in the world, that no one would put up with her but me. ('Put up' with her!) She'll try and go away for a whole month sometimes, and hates it, and always gets into a difficult corner. . . . She's high, she's low. She's a perfect Dear. She loathes emotional people, yet adores me. I scarcely ever dare kiss her, and I'm always dying to, but she hates it from anyone. It 'cuts both ways' I assure you, the having an impersonal person for a daughter. . . . But oh, she's really sweetness and softness indeed. Only she's odd. . . . I've prayed she might love, but I don't pray for that now. I'll tell you some day when we've time to meet.

She realized by 1896 that Edy 'will never get a chance of distinguishing herself' at the Lyceum, though 'she can, and must, and will'. She begged Shaw to give her a chance to develop as an actress. 'If only she had nobody to help her she would get on fast enough,' replied Shaw, who thought she was inhibited by being

Ellen Terry's daughter; nevertheless, through his influence, she was engaged in 1897 by Janet Achurch and her husband to play Prossy in *Candida*. 'She is like a boy in her youth and virginity,' he wrote in July, when Edy was twenty-seven. Ellen, missing her when she was away on tour, thought it 'good for her to feel the struggle of life alone for a while. She has always thought it so easy'. Later in the year she found 'the loneliness mixed up with jealousy' oppressive. 'I think she is the only one I was ever jealous about. Folk think she cares for me. I don't. I never plague her with my love, but oh how she cuts my heart to ribbons sometimes, and very likely she doesn't intend to be unkind.' Yet, the following year in April she writes: 'I'm Edy's Mother, and I so fear I don't know the people I adore . . . I do wish someone would hasten and offer her (Edy) a London engagement. It is so bad for her to be far from me for a long time.

Edy, unemployed, became in effect Ellen's personal manager, looking after her both inside and outside the theatre. This is evident in Allan Wade's description of them behind the scenes during the run of *Captain Brassbound's Conversion* at the Court. Allan Wade had a small walking-on part in the production.

One might almost have thought that the roles of mother and daughter had been reversed – and the 'daughter' was sometimes headstrong and by no means easy to control. Miss Terry, coming down from her dressing-room on the first floor, would in the kindness of her heart, stop to chat with anybody she met – stage-hand, dresser, understudy – there was always something to say. She had discovered, how I don't know for I certainly never told her, that I had been a subscriber, for some years earlier, to Gordon Craig's magazine *The Page* which he had illustrated with his own woodcuts, and so I became for her 'a friend of Teddy's' – though actually it was many years later that I first met him. 'Oh yes – you are a friend of Teddy's; I heard from him last week.' 'Come on, mother,' Edy's voice would be heard from the stage-door. 'Oh, that's Edy,' Miss Terry would say with an even sweeter smile. 'I mustn't keep her waiting!'

And then, perhaps, she would meet somebody else coming up from the stage below and have another little talk. To my interested observation Miss Craig, as I then thought of her, seemed genial, a little brusque in speech, somewhat impatient, and certainly a very dominant personality.¹³

Edy always excited different reactions; she was whatever you saw her to be. For Chris, she was 'a saint', full of faults, she admits but free from 'self-love', wonderful in her 'magnanimity', her 'humility', her 'unworldliness', her enthusiasm for her work, her radiant enjoyment. For others, she was a feminist, militant about women's rights though not an active suffragette, a member of the Women's Freedom League and of the Actresses' Franchise League. But, for all her prickly humanity, she had no tact and was regarded by many as a trouble-maker and a dangerous woman at all costs to be avoided. This aspect of her nature ruined a career which otherwise might have been brilliant. She had a lively sense of humour; she was kind and patient with children, and above everything she wanted to be helpful, but her helpfulness always took the unfortunate form of organizing other people's lives for them to the point of causing resentment and pain. Ellen, extravagantly prejudiced, regarded her as 'something better than the best actress in the world'. Harcourt Williams, who came to know her well when he joined Ellen's company, praised her as a stage director:

Her flair for costume and colour was inimitable. Her stage craft, always sound, frequently touched brilliance. Her criticisms were trenchant and often brusque, but so vital and finally good-humoured that none but a fool or a coxcomb could resent them. Her outbursts at rehearsal came and went like summer storms and left no trace of malice or aftermath of ill-temper. Her mother, who sometimes encountered these squalls with the rest of us, knew so well how to weather them. . . .¹⁴

Gordon Craig gives a remarkable and revealing picture of Ellen and Edy rivalling each other at the piano:

My mother, who could and couldn't play, knew what it was to attack a difficult piece of music, and they often played together. When Mother attacked, she was resplendent, and Edy gave up. Duets they played – and Edy, despairing to improve my mother, took to arguing; and the fierce torrent of music ceased, and logic took its place. Edy utterly annihilated Mother with her logic: she explained that if a piece was written to be played slowly and with such and such emphasis, it was not being polite to the composer, especially if his name was Brahms, to . . . Here Mother peered at the music to see the name of this celebrated being: 'Yes – it is Brahms.' All this gently murmured while Edy's scathing logic marched on. At the end of the speech, Mother would say: 'Let's try it again.' . . . And again Mother dashed in and on, and Edy came following after. Again a traffic jam. 'What's the matter?' 'Twice too fast,' said Edy. . . . And the funny thing was that she was right and Mother couldn't believe her own daughter's ears. 'Once more!' cries Mother. And this time Edy only pretended to play and let E.T. go ahead as fast as she liked – to the end of the piece.

The marriage with James Carew could not last. Ellen was, as her son put it, 'unmarriageable'. It seems the marriage was never consummated; all Ellen wanted was a man about the house. She would not have dreamed of going to bed with him. But no man, least of all the uncomplicated Carew, could understand the jealous tensions that were roused by the particular relationship between Ellen and Edy. Edy could not bear the sight of Ellen in a state of matrimony, consummated or not, and the gap in the hedge which allowed a path to join the two properties of Smallhythe and Priest's House became overgrown through disuse. She refused to have anything to do with her mother, and the estrangement became a matter of gossip and intrigue in their wide circle of female friends and acquaintances. Ellen, doubly unhappy at the loss of both her beloved children in circumstances of such difficulty, did not prove an easy wife for any man to understand and tolerate. That there was affection between her and her husband is proved

by the fact that they remained warm friends for the rest of their lives. But the relationship as a marriage could not last. A judicial separation was arranged two years later, and James moved out of the household. The gap in the hedge was reopened, and Edy returned triumphantly to power. She became her mother's 'manager' for the rest of her life – capable up to a point, long-suffering, exasperating, driving Ellen ultimately either mad or mischievous with her uncompromising, domineering demands. Ellen's self-protection began to take on oblique forms; she became more wayward, more evasive, blind and deaf to what she did not want to see or hear, and, unfortunately, less responsible in the handling of her affairs. Edy was forced to accept that certain of Ellen's male friends had to be admitted to King's Road or to Smallhythe – Sir Albert Seymour, with his charm, his humour, his high-pitched voice, his stutter, or Graham Robertson, the wealthy painter, dark and distinctive in his aestheticism. Occasionally there were signs that Teddy might sweep back to England. Edy, full of love-hate for her brother, would willingly have barred the door to him if only she could. If it had not been for the constant presence of Edy, Gordon Craig would probably have let his small daughter Nellie come to live with her grandmother far earlier than he did. And Ellen would have liked nothing better.

Professionally, Ellen was living on her 'image'. So strong was her position as a 'personality' that there was no time throughout the rest of her long life when she could not excite attention through her public appearances. The tragedy lay in the lack of any real need for her in the theatre. Her work was done. But for the sake of money it was necessary to keep herself employed. She had insufficient income for her needs and those of her many dependants. Ellen, incurably generous, kept a secret list of needy people to whom she sent small but regular sums of money. This she would consult, sending the maid out to the post with the envelope in which she had tucked the money. Edy mustn't know about this.

Edy made it her business to see that Ellen was kept as constantly engaged as possible. As a result, Ellen was afflicted with a long

trail of engagements in spite of her failing health, her poor eyesight, and in later years her wandering attention. To Graham Robertson's delight she agreed to appear in his play for children, *Pinkie and the Fairies*, the outcome of his affection for his ward Marion Melville, the little daughter of his friend and artistic partner, Arthur Melville, a painter and illustrator who had died of typhoid contracted in Spain during 1903. In 1908 'Binkie', as Marion was called, was six, and she had Ellen for her godmother. Ellen, ceaselessly patient with children but ever-insistent about the correctness of their speech and deportment, had begun by teaching four-year-old Binkie how to play her old part of Mamillius at the time she was herself preparing to play Hermione for Tree at His Majesty's in 1906. Robertson wrote his fairy play for Binkie, and it was set to music by Frederic Norton. In October 1908, Tree offered to produce it at His Majesty's. Ellen, who knew the script, wrote to Robertson from Smallhythe on 9 November:

Blow the trumpets, beat the drums! I am delighted, my dear. Did you read it to Tree? I do like Tree, he *does* things. But take care. You must have your say in all of it or — I'd so much like to see your alterations (cuts, I suppose) in the last Act. Keep well and let me help you in bits of your work if I can.¹⁵

The play opened at Christmas with Ellen in the cast. Her reception was tumultuous, as Robertson describes:

My chief memory is of the terrific outburst of applause that greeted Ellen Terry. She had not been seen for some time, and when she stepped upon the stage a storm seemed to break. It crashed out suddenly, like a thunderclap directly overhead, pealed on for a few moments, then settled into a steady roar which rolled on and on with a rhythmic throb like the beating of great drums and seemed as though it would never cease.

This was to be the pattern of Ellen's final years as an actress, a respected public figure appearing in parts of ever-decreasing

importance until she was reduced, in more advanced years still, to one-night stands in the provinces through which she staggered, sustained by Edy's indomitable will. But throughout these final indignities she never lost her hold on the public imagination owing to the undying largeness of her personality. And, between 1916 and 1921, she was to appear in five films.¹⁶

The only work of distinction that she undertook after the end of her appearances for Tree were the series of Shakespearean lecture-recitals she gave between 1910 and 1921, when she was between the ages of sixty-two and seventy-three. In these she was able to relive momentarily many of her greatest moments on the stage. The written text of these recitals was carefully prepared with the help of Chris, and the scripts were marked up like any of her play scripts at the Lyceum: 'take time', 'quiet', 'keep still', 'low voice', 'with humour, rather reckless', 'dark, fierce, ardent', 'whisper', and so on. Chris says she was recalled to Ellen's side (having been 'banished', as she puts it, like one infectious since her marriage) in order to help her once again with her writing. The popularity of these lecture-tours gave Ellen a profound satisfaction, while the high fees made a substantial addition to her income. Again according to Chris: 'The proposal that she should lecture on Shakespeare came at a moment when she was puzzled, disheartened and disappointed at her failure to maintain her position. Time was pushing her into retirement.'¹⁷

The lecture-tours, suggested initially by the literary agent Curtis Brown, began in America in 1910, opening on 3 November in the form of a *matinée* at the Hudson Theatre, New York. Ellen had preceded the tour with a single appearance in London, the success of which encouraged her. She was not in very good health, as she wrote to Stephen Coleridge from on board the *Oceanic*: 'I can get through so little nowadays. . . . My heart has played me horrid tricks lately and frustrated all I undertook. . . . The first time I am making this long journey *alone* – and I feel strange.'¹⁸

Everywhere she went in the United States she was *fêted*. She did not return to England until the spring of 1911. Once

home again, a second tour was arranged for her in England. The lectures were so successful that the following year Albert Chevalier arranged a three-week season for her at the Savoy, her recital placed between two short plays, one of which was Barrie's *Pantaloon*.

Edy assisted her mother with the formal presentation of these lectures in England, which Chris describes as follows:

Aided by her daughter, she created 'scene' on the platform with dark green curtains, bunches of flowers and ingenious lighting. She wore flowing robes of crimson, or white or grey, the colour being determined by the mood of the discourses in her repertory and of the scenes she read, or acted, to illustrate them. For a lectern, she used one of the decorative desks, made for Irving and her in the year 1889 when they gave readings of 'Macbeth'. She had several copies of each lecture printed in a type large and bold enough for her to read the text without spectacles, and these folios were finely and solidly bound.¹⁹

'This discoursing is exhausting work,' wrote Ellen when it was proposed she undertake a world tour, starting in Australia in 1914, 'far more exhausting than playing a part, for I have to sustain the burden of the whole entertainment for nearly two hours. And then there is the travelling'. Although warned against the tour on the grounds that her heart was showing signs of strain – 'a kicking Donkey', she called it, she did so partly because, according to Chris, she was determined to maintain the financial help she gave so constantly, especially to Edy and her grandchildren. If she were to die, it was all the more necessary, in her view, for her to leave the family a reasonable competence. The tour opened in Melbourne in May 1914, when she was sixty-six. Edy did not go with her. Her diaries and her letters home from Australia and New Zealand show her reactions:

First lecture in Australia. Very ill, very nervous, but I let myself go! I don't think they liked it much, however. After the Juliet scene, a lot of floral tributes and applause, but also God

Save the King, and every one went out before I had nearly finished!

My blessed old Edy, how hard I've been trying to keep going at my work, you'll never know, but it was no use trying, and on the conclusion of my last performance in Sydney, the doctor flatly told me I must not appear for a fortnight at least. I had to give in, and then we went over the water to Auckland, twelve hundred miles or so. I was worse than ever when I got there, but I landed in a dear little hotel, and was just nursed through my great weakness by the kind landlady, and now I think I'll get through the rest of the lectures easily.²⁰

After war had been declared she wrote while staying with Melba in Coldstream, Victoria, that 'all engagements are being cancelled'. She accompanied Melba, giving free recitals to help war charities. Of Melba and her home she wrote: 'This (Melba's cottage at Coldstream) is an ideal spot, and Melba makes it an ideal home. She is so strong in body and character – a *splendid* woman, a magnetic one. She is thinking out kindnesses every hour of the day. I just love her now.' But Ellen's heart was in Kent, which she now imagined to be threatened by invasion by the German army: 'Maybe they are in Kent by now, perhaps inhabiting *our cottages*! And perhaps you may be giving them some tea! The horrors of this war for a few minutes now and again make me crazy, when I dare think, but I *darent*, and only pray that no harm comes near you, and that somehow or another we meet at home before Christmas.'

She did not return to England until May 1915, travelling by way of America where she gave more recitals to cover her expenses. On 27 February her left eye was operated on for cataract in New York, but she was recovered sufficiently by April 23 (Shakespeare's birthday) to make what was to be her final appearance in the United States at the Neighbourhood Theatre, New York. 'Nervous and weak at first,' she wrote. 'Soon inspired by the warmth of the audience.' It was, of course not recognized as a farewell appearance in the United States, and everyone radiated

happiness. A First Folio of Shakespeare, lent by J. P. Morgan for a foyer exhibition, was brought to her in her dressing-room into which many people crowded to talk with her as she examined it. She was to leave America at the end of the month. She was offered a suite on the *Lusitania* by a friend of Charles Frohman, who was himself sailing on it, but she preferred for safety's sake to sail on a neutral American liner, the *New York*. By the time she landed in Liverpool the *Lusitania* had been sunk.

What delighted her most during these years was the company of her friends and, above all, of her grandchildren. Of the children born as a result of Ted's initial marriage and succession of love affairs, none appealed to her more than Little Nelly and Little Teddy, her grandchildren by Elena Meo. She shared with Isadora Duncan the tragic loss of Deirdre, another grandchild (whom she had never seen), when, with her half-brother Patrick, the child was drowned in a car which plunged out of control into the Seine.

Elena was to be the constant love of Ted's life. She alone understood him and, like Ellen, accepted him as he was, selflessly and generously. Unlike his former wife, she came from a true artist's background; she was used to the conversation of such constant visitors to her father's house as Samuel Butler, Burne-Jones and Swinburne. Also, she had an Irish mother, and when Ellen came to know her intimately in later years, she loved Elena and made her her companion and confidante. Elena's children were born in a flat in Southminster, Nellie on 11 January 1904 and Teddy on 3 January 1905, when his father was on the Continent with Isadora Duncan. However, when Ted learned of the birth of his son he hurried back to be with Elena. She became used to these sudden, unannounced visits; however much he was distracted by sudden passions for other women, Elena was the one woman to whom he always returned and the mother of the children who remained close to him throughout his life.

Ellen did not see her new grandchildren immediately. Ted first brought them to meet her around 1908, before spiriting them away for a period on the Continent, where they lived intermittently

in Paris and Florence, returning to London according to Ted's preoccupations of the moment. But soon Elena and they were to become a most welcome part of Ellen's household, delighting her heart. In a notebook entry which appears to belong to 1914, Ellen writes: 'For the last four years Elena and her two wonderful children, my most beloved grandchildren, have lived with me, and I am most happy, and not alone. Ted comes and goes from his work in Italy, and this must soon fix them all up there. Meanwhile, they are my joys.'²¹ This idyllic relationship, in which Edy joined, lasted until 1917, when Ted once more withdrew Elena and the children and took them back to Italy.

Ellen always loved her son's peripatetic entrances into her life. He arrived suddenly like some laughing demon king wrapped in his cloak, his long hair only half-concealed under his broad-brimmed hat. He was the genius she had created out of her love for Godwin. She knew he was irresponsible; perhaps she considered his irresponsibility to be part of the birthright she had given him herself, reserving the responsible part for Edy, who increasingly resented her brother's unforeseen incursions. They were so often associated with wild projects in which Ted, brimming over with excitement, would try to involve his mother. Edy knew only too well that they always meant fresh demands on Ellen's resources. Ellen would laugh uproariously at Ted's outrageous jokes, while Edy, angry and mortified, grew ever more bitter and spinsterly in her reproaches. But Elena was there now, Elena who had the kind of woman's understanding that Ellen most appreciated. She was, says Chris, 'daft about Elena'. Together they shared their unceasing devotion to Ted, whatever he might choose to do once he had left them, disappearing with a flash of lightning back to the Continent. Edy was thrust more and more into the bosom of her women friends, who were later to include Radclyffe Hall, the author of *The Well of Loneliness*, the writer Cecily Hamilton, Una Trowbridge and, during and after the First World War, Clare (Tony) Atwood, the artist, with whom Edy and Chris formed the celebrated household of three on which Shaw was to make his pointed comment: 'You ought

to write a history of that *ménage à trois*,' wrote Shaw ironically to Chris after Edy's death in 1947. 'It was unique in my experience.'²² They retained the flat in Bedford Street as well as the Priest's house in Smallhythe.

Edy shared with Ellen a love for the children. For Ellen it was as if little Edy and little Ted had returned from the past to light up the long days of her later years. Indeed she would often make the mistake of calling little Nellie by Edy's name. Harcourt Williams, a constant visitor to Smallhythe, remembers a birthday party for Little Teddy:

A little stage deftly arranged between the sitting-room and the kitchen at Yew Tree Cottage, opposite the Farm. The proscenium no wider than a doorway, but, for an audience of three or four, Edy made it seem big enough. There were comic interludes and other matters which have faded from my mind, but what glows there still is the picture of the boy, Teddy Craig, dressed in a snow-white farmer's smock, holding a shepherd's crook in his hand and in the bend of his arm a china lamb, whilst Ellen Terry read Blake's poem 'Little Lamb, who made thee?' Teddy had thick, longish hair, and the bend of his small head towards the lamb was simple and very beautiful.²³

James, the household husband, had long since gone, though he remained a friendly visitor in the childhood memories of the grandchildren who did not lose touch with him when they reached maturity. But it was Ellen who shared with the devoted Elena the upbringing of the children during the war. She wanted, as always, to give both Teddy and Nellie a basic training for the stage, and they made walk-on appearances in plays during the war period.²⁴ She took them constantly to the theatre and to the music halls, which were now rapidly declining in number as the popularity of the cinema grew. While she was living in the King's Road she loved to cross the street in the evening to visit the Chelsea Palace music hall. The manager, resplendent in top-hat, white tie and tailcoat, always delighted to receive her. 'This way, Miss Terry,'

he would say, guiding her along to a private box, usually with Little Teddy bringing up the rear, his eyes fascinated by the great watch-chain suspended in a loop across the manager's white waistcoat. Sometimes Ellen would meet Marie Lloyd, who usually kept a bottle of gin in her large handbag. 'D'you fancy a drop, dearie?' she would say to Ellen, who always said 'no' with a laugh, as she never drank spirits. Champagne was more to her taste.

When the air-raids came to London, Ellen calmed the timid servants when they all hurried down to the ground floor room, which was considered safest in these unknown dangerous circumstances. Ellen did not mind sleeping on the floor; she liked lying on a hard surface, and so did Teddy, lying back-to-back with Granny during the long, exciting nights. Teddy remembers their poor old cook coming up from the kitchen, crying in sheer despair at the awful stories of atrocity she had picked out from the papers. She stood there, old and weeping, with Ellen trying to comfort her. 'If they come here, ma'am, will they cut me breasties off?'

After the children had gone, Ellen suffered acutely from their loss. Perhaps she had loved them too possessively while they were there; she had not liked sparing them for an instant, even when they went off to visit their other grandparents, Gaetano Meo and his wife in Hampstead. Ellen occupied herself with a series of performances of scenes from Shakespeare starting at the Coliseum in November 1917 and continuing subsequently in the provincial music halls under Oswald Stoll's management. The scenes were from *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. A very young actress, Edith Evans, appeared as Mrs Ford. Later, in 1919, her memory sadly astray, she appeared as the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*.

Ellen's appearances in films began in 1916. She was invited by the British Ideal Film Company to star in a production called *Her Greatest Performance*, in which Edy was also offered a supporting part. The film, which was released in January 1917, was produced by Fred Paul, an actor who had become an established

producer-director. Apart from the fact of Ellen's appearance on the screen in the part of a retired actress, Julia Lovelace, the film had no distinction. Julia Lovelace relives her former successes, which are somewhat similar to those of Ellen herself, in the triumphs of her widowed son, Gerald, a well-known actor. Gerald is wrongfully accused of the murder of his friend, Stephen Brinton, and imprisoned for manslaughter. The identity of the real murderer is known to Julia's former dresser, Mrs Carter, now an alcoholic; this was the part played by Edy. After Mrs Carter on her death bed has confessed her knowledge to Julia, the old actress impersonates the dead woman in order to enforce a confession from the real murderer. 'It will be my greatest performance,' says Julia, looking upwards. 'Grant that it may be my most successful.' That she is successful goes without saying. The fact that this sentimental melodrama was created specially to suit Ellen's talent and background does not prevent it from being a sad début to the screen. However, like Duse, who made her only film, *Cenere* (Ashes), in Italy that same year, she lent the qualities of her personality to this impoverished material, though she scarcely did more than gain some casual enjoyment as well as some useful money from the experience. She liked the opportunities to meet and talk to people which film-making offered, and Bernard Shaw visited her on the set. She made much of Joan Morgan, who played the part of her grandchild in the story, Gerald's daughter. But the technique of film production, which involved creating a part scene by scene between what seemed to be lengthy waits spent sitting in a chair, soon began to bore her.

Though she did not enjoy the process of film-making, she did enjoy going to see films. She admired *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*, and wished that Irving could have played the part of the somnambulist in which Conrad Veidt appeared. She enjoyed *Blood and Sand*, and thought Valentino had the ideal poise for Romeo. She celebrated her birthday in 1924 by going to see Chaplin's new film, *A Woman of Paris*; she had loved Chaplin's films ever since seeing *The Kid*. During the war she had taken Little Teddy to see Griffith's great films *The Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance*, and they

had impressed her as much as everyone else with the capacity of the screen to present action on a scale impossible in the theatre.

The next film in which she appeared was *The Invasion of Britain*, which was an official production sponsored by the Ministry of Information in 1918. The scenario was written by the popular novelist Hall Caine, and the film was directed by Herbert Brenon. This ambitious production was never shown because Brenon took so long to complete it that the war was over before it was finished. Fortunately, a sequence has been reserved in which Ellen, playing the part of a mother whose hero-son is killed at the front, is seen receiving the news of his death from her daughter-in-law, played by José Collins. Here we are able to see something at least of Ellen's art: limited to mime, she uses her hands and the movement of her head to express the devastation of a mother's grief. Though the scene lasts barely two minutes, it matches for these brief moments the screen achievement of Duse. And it reveals her great command of pathos.

Ellen's later appearances on the screen, apart, that is, from several in the newsreels, occurred in three further films, *The Pillars of Society* (1921), *Potter's Clay* (begun in November 1921, and first shown in March 1922), and *The Bohemian Girl* (1922). A complete print of the last film, directed by Harley Knowles, fortunately survives, and shows Ellen in a gracious but otherwise undistinguished performance as the nurse, Buda, who is responsible for the loss of Count Arnheim's child, Arlene, who is abducted and brought up by the gypsies. The cast of this well-made film was an interesting one: it included Gladys Cooper, Constance Collier, Ivor Novello and C. Aubrey Smith.

According to Chris, Ellen found it difficult to take direction in films, with the result that she was only able to give what was needed emotionally in flashes. Too often she found that these moments of concentration to order were beyond her control, and the methods of work in the studios and on location were quite alien to her. For example, says Chris, 'she saw in the trial scene in *Her Greatest Performance*, when a mother has the terrible experience of seeing her son, of whose innocence she is certain,

made to appear guilty through a weight of incriminating evidence, her best opportunity for acting. But throughout the scene, the camera was picking out the prisoner, the witnesses, the judge, and members of the jury as well as the distraught mother. The scene was not moving in the same way or at the same pace as it was in Ellen Terry's imagination, with the result that when she was "shot" she was often expressing an emotion inappropriate at the particular moment.' She became more accustomed to film-making with time, and Chris believes her best scene was in the prologue to *The Pillars of Society*. Unfortunately, no print of this film is known to have survived.

It must be remembered that Ellen was in her seventies when she worked in these last three films. 'She's just past taking direction,' said one of the executives to Douglas Payne, the assistant producer on *Potter's Clay*.²⁵ According to Payne, Edy pleaded with him to let Ellen work only half days, as she was tired, and he rearranged the shooting schedule with some difficulty to meet her demands, only to discover subsequently that Edy had arranged for her to work in some other studio during the period she was released from *Potter's Clay*. Edy is remembered by Joan Morgan as a dominant figure in the studios during the filming of *Her Greatest Performance*; she watched over her mother with a fierce protective loyalty which did not endear her to the film-makers. Ellen, of course, was charming to everyone, though often nervous when it came to the crucial moment of performance before the cameras.

But, like her lecturing engagements, these films produced useful money to supplement her depleted income. Her appearances in the theatre remained transient. In 1915 she appeared for a charity matinée at the Haymarket in a ballet-pantomime based on a story by Hans Andersen, *The Princess and the Pea*, in which both Little Teddy and Nellie 'walked on' with her. Barrie created the new part of the old housekeeper, Darling, in *The Admirable Crichton*, especially so that she might play it in another charity matinée the same year. In 1919 she played the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* to Doris Keane's Juliet, and this was to be her last appearance in a

full-length Shakespearean production. 'I'm keeping all the rude bits in,' wrote Ellen to her young friend Marguerite Steen.

By this time her finances were in so precarious a condition that she was forced by Edy in 1921 to give up the house in Chelsea, though she retained Smallhythe. She was still carelessly generous over money, in spite of Edy's attempts at strict surveillance. Her health by now had deteriorated, and her sight was very poor. It came as a profound shock to her when many of her most precious possessions at King's Road were sold and, after a period in Smallhythe, she was moved by Edy to a small three-roomed flat in St Martin's Lane; this was at Burleigh Mansions, a block with a grim and gloomy entrance. In her diary for 26 April 1921, Ellen wrote: 'I am unhinged (*not* unhappy) and comfortable. I wonder where everything is. Cannot remember new things. All is changed. Change at 73 puzzles the will. I live in puzzledom.'²⁶ Edy was not far off in Bedford Street, and James Carew, his friendship still surviving the broken marriage, lived in effect next door to her. The theatres, the restaurants she loved, and many of her friends were near her, but servants and companions began now to find her difficult and would not stay long in her service. According to Marguerite Steen, she even showed signs of panic and, in spite of her frailty, was only too ready to accept any kind of work which would bring in money for herself and her dependants. In July 1921, Marguerite Steen accompanied her to the Gaiety Theatre, Manchester, where she had been offered £100 and expenses to appear twice daily for a week in scenes from her 'repertoire'; in spite of the heat, she managed to fulfil the engagement, appearing between films (ironically enough, the theatre was celebrating its conversion into a cinema) and reciting 'The Quality of Mercy' and other speeches and poems with the help of Marguerite Steen's anxious prompting. Ellen gave the fee to Edy, who had been unable at the last minute to accompany her mother as she normally would have done, nursing her through her performances.

Following her succession of films Ellen made other spasmodic stage appearances which culminated in her final performance in

the theatre; this was in Walter de la Mare's play *Crossings*, in which she played Susan Wildersham at the Lyric, Hammersmith, during 1925. Chris, who was present at a rehearsal, records the effect she created: 'I was standing in the stalls at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, when Ellen Terry made her first entrance. The vision of this fragile creature, far advanced in years, yet somehow not old, tremulously gliding across the stage with loving arms outstretched, all earthiness purged away by time, the spirit of beauty, rather than beauty itself, filled the spectators with a strange awe. A long sighing 'Oh!' arose from them all, and the sound was a more wonderful tribute than any applause I have ever heard.'²⁷

So, to the last possible moment, she carried her youth with her. Her hair, luxuriant still, flowed about her head as if it were yellow, not white; her face seemed smooth under its careful, unobtrusive dusting with French chalk, and her lips were touched with a special coloured salve supplied to her from Paris in small jars, the lids of which were always decorated with an ornamental flower. She had become thin again to the point of frailty; her slender figure enhanced the impression of youthfulness, and her voice remained fully toned, deep and clear with fine enunciation. On the stage she retained command of her movements; only in strange surroundings did she become hesitant, feeling her way among the unfamiliar tables and chairs, revealing the extent to which her sight had dimmed. Her mental perception came and went during the last few years of her life.

She outlived Bernhardt, Duse, even Isadora Duncan. She saw Bernhardt for the last time in London in a play called *Daniel*, in which she impersonated a young man in a wheelchair; they had met afterwards in Sarah's dressing-room, where Ellen praised her performance. When Sarah died in 1923 Ellen attended a Requiem mass at Westminster Cathedral, taking care to hold herself upright, though by now her back was weakened by age.

Duse appeared for the last time in London in 1923; Chris was sent on to meet her at Victoria station with a bunch of red roses, presenting them to her with Ellen's love. Duse, exhausted after a

long illness, looked as if she would be unable to act, but at the sound of Ellen's name Chris saw her face become 'young and radiant'. Ellen went to see her in a matinée performance of Ibsen's *The Lady from the Sea*. 'Oh! she was Perfection!' wrote Ellen in her diary. 'I took her some flowers and she used them in the play. Afterwards I went round to see her. She seems even nobler now than when she was young. Was warmly affectionate to me and to my Edy.'²⁸ Duse died while on tour in America in April the following year.

Isadora Duncan's death followed in 1927. Ellen had seen her perform her dance of the Revolution at the Queen's Hall in June 1921 before she had left for Russia. 'I never saw *true* tragedy before,' wrote Ellen. At the end Isadora had spoken from the stage and invited her audience to acknowledge the presence of Ellen among them. After her passionate love affair with Teddy, Isadora Duncan had written affectionate letters to Ellen. Among some unpublished correspondence from her preserved at Smallhythe, there is an undated letter (which from internal evidence must have been written round 1908) which reveals how much she had felt herself at that time to be a member of Ellen's family:

Dearest and Sweet Nell. My heart leapt for joy when I saw your letter – How gracious and kind of you to write —

I don't know where to write to Ted – he did not answer my last letter so I think did not receive it —

Whether I write or no my heart goes out to him always wherever he is – I long for him just as I long always to see his Baby but I don't dare to think of it – or I shouldn't be able to live at all – That there is a Glorious Future waiting for him of that I never have had a doubt – It has seemed a long time for him to wait but it will only be the greater when it comes.

I will sail about Dec. 20th and dance in Paris – January – then to Budapest – February till March I go to Russia – I hope to steal a little time and come over to see you – Perhaps Ted might be there too – what a rejoicing we could have —

Where shall I write to Ted – I feel so much about him that I

can't write – when I take up a pen – it all comes over me – choking – I can't write – Well perhaps we can all sit about the same table some day soon and drink to his Health and Glory.

He always looks wonderful – All the light and beauty of the World – That's what he is – *You* are the only one who understands how I love him – it will all come right some day.

With all my love. Isadora.

When Ellen's grandchild by Isadora had been drowned in Paris, the family link was severed. But their friendship remained. Isadora herself died in Nice a year before Ellen; she was strangled to death and her neck broken when the end of her long trailing scarf caught in the wheel of a car in which she was being driven.

After an interval, which to many of her admirers seemed a national disgrace, Ellen was made a Dame Grand Cross in 1925. Though she was pleased with the distinction it brought both to her sex and to her profession, she did not like the idea of the title itself; she did not want to be called a 'Dame'. At the investiture, which was held in private at Buckingham Palace, she was accompanied by Edy. When she was received by the King, Edy described her 'wonderful curtsy on entering – slow, stately, very expressive'. She was seventy-eight. When she left she had to be assisted; she was groping to find her way. Then suddenly she laughed outright, 'I quite forgot to walk out backwards,' she said to Edy. The King, who was just behind her, laughed with her. Then she met Queen Mary, who remembered her so well from the days of the Lyceum.

During these last years Ellen became the object of yet another factional struggle. When Edy and Teddy as small children had attended a mixed school together, Edy had made friends with a girl who shared the same first name, Edie Lanc. This friendship survived into adult years but was later to develop into a bitter enmity. Edie had married H. A. (Taffy) Gwynn, who was eventually to become editor of the *Morning Post*, and the break in the friendship with Edy occurred at the time of the marriage. The fierce difference between the two women broke out afresh when,

during the 1920s, Edie Gwynn did all she could to expose what she claimed to be Edy's vicious exploitation of her mother's helpless position and the mismanagement of her affairs. What Edie Gwynn tried so passionately to do was to dispossess Edy and take over the management of Ellen herself. She failed in this, but only after creating an unpleasant amount of gossip, and winning over as many supporters as she could.

There were always others who, without belonging to Edie Gwynn's faction, disagreed with Edy's conduct of her mother's affairs. There had even been some suggestion in about 1924 among Edy's circle at Priest's House that Ellen should be placed in a 'mental institution'; she was considered a danger to herself, for she would wander about the house at Smallhythe during the night, talking to herself and tracing the fading memories of the past which were enshrined in the objects in every room or looked out at her from portraits and pictures hanging upon her walls. She could not sleep, and she would wander out in the garden in search of the moon as Godwin had told her to do. It would have been merciless to part her from the treasures of house and garden, and Fred Terry among others intervened vehemently to prevent it. It was Hilda Barnes, Ellen's last companion and nurse, who watched over her during these final, difficult years, and withstood even Edy's attempts to have things her own way. So long as 'Barney' remained at Smallhythe there was no need to sever Ellen from the place she loved. She was even well enough in February 1928 to travel a short distance and stay with her friend Lady Mabel Egerton at Watlington.²⁹ Graham Robertson wrote to Kerrison Preston saying he had seen her and that she looked 'very frail', but a few weeks earlier she had been 'wickedly funny' when she had told him all about her sister Marion's recent visit to Smallhythe and her ladylike behaviour. 'It was a mercy *you* weren't there,' Ellen had said, 'or I should certainly have got the giggles and disgraced myself.' However, at the end of February, Graham Robertson wrote that 'the Lady' was 'drifting away into a strange vague world where nothing is real and people bear no names'. She was still at Watlington being protected, as Graham

Robertson puts it, from Edy and Ted, about whom, he says, his language had become 'forcible'. Early in March he spoke to James Carew, who had recently been to visit Ellen and told him about her reaction to seeing the man who was still her husband:

She had a flash of recognition and was pleased to find him there, 'Tell me, Jim,' she said clearly, 'I can't quite remember – did I kick you out or did you kick me out?' 'Well, dear,' said poor Jim cautiously, 'I think we arranged it between us, didn't we?' 'Yes, so we did,' said Nell. Then, after a pause: 'Dam' fools, weren't we?

Slowly the time to die approached. She spent her last months in 1928 at Smallhythe, her mind veiled, her strength fading. Then the news came in July that she had had a stroke. Ted, fortunately, was on one of his rare visits to London; his son Teddy was already in England, having left Italy the year before to make his own career in London. They were both summoned by Edy to Smallhythe, and they were there with her and Barney when Ellen died early in the morning of 21 July. The sun was shining and the garden thick with flowers. It was the height of summer, and a good day to die.

Ellen herself had made it clear that she wanted 'no funeral gloom'. Her pall was made of cloth of gold from India.³⁰ Edy put a sprig of jasmine in her folded hands, and the family and friends stood by her in turns as she lay surrounded with flowers, her face lit by candlelight through the night watches.

Graham Robertson came to Smallhythe for the funeral. 'She would not care whether one went or not,' he wrote to Kerrison Preston, 'one cannot associate her with funerals.' It took place at the little village church, and then the cortège covered with the golden pall and decorated with flowers travelled to Golders Green for the cremation. The church bells were asked to ring out, not to toll, their last greetings to her. People lined the way of the sixty-mile journey to London. They brought their flowers and threw them in tribute to her. Her last bouquets.

What she would have enjoyed during all this public parade of

death, the services, the processions, the crowding photographers and reporters, the sightseers gathered to watch the solemn movement of coaches and cars during the long ride through countryside and town to the fires of Golders Green, would have been what Barney said as they left the church at Smallhythe – how glad she was they had played Ellen's favourite tune, the 'Dromedary' Air. How she would have laughed at Ted's remark when he grew excited at seeing so many of his relatives gathered round him. Clutching his sister's arm as they led the procession of mourners behind their mother's coffin, he said in a voice that everyone could hear: 'We must have more occasions like this.' They had become close now and for the moment reconciled.

Bernard Shaw had written while Ellen was at the height of her powers: 'Ellen Terry is the most beautiful name in the world; it rings like a chime through the last quarter of the nineteenth century.' Now, in our century, to which she also belonged, her ashes are kept in the actors' church, St Paul's in Covent Garden.

NOTES

The principal published sources for this book are the writings of Ellen Terry herself, notably her *Memoirs* in the edition edited by her daughter, Edith Craig, and by Christopher St John and published in 1933, and her correspondence with Bernard Shaw, edited by Christopher St John and published in 1931. Other important sources include two early biographies, *Ellen Terry* by Charles Hiatt (1898) and *Ellen Terry and her Sisters* by T. Edgar Pemberton (1902), the study of her written by her son, Edward Gordon Craig, *Ellen Terry and her Secret Self* (1931) together with his own autobiographical notes, *Index to the Story of my Days* (1957) and, for the period Ellen Terry was working at the Lyceum with Irving, Laurence Irving's meticulous study of his grandfather, *Henry Irving: the Actor and his World* (1951). I am also indebted for many points of detail to Marguerite Steen's picturesque account of the whole Terry family, *A Pride of Terrys* (1962). For details of theatrical history I have naturally turned to many books which are listed in the bibliography and referred to in the Notes below.

Evidence given to me personally by Ellen Terry's grandson, Edward Craig, has been of inestimable value throughout the preparation of this book. So too has the information I have obtained from Irving's grandson, Laurence Irving. The help I have received from other special sources, notably the Ellen Terry Memorial Museum at Smallhythe, the British Theatre Museum and the Library of the British Drama League, are acknowledged elsewhere.

In the notes below, the following initials are used: Ellen Terry appears as E.T., Gordon Craig as E.G.C., Edward Craig as E.C. and the author as R.M.

CHAPTER I: BEGINNINGS

Apart from E.T.'s *Memoirs*, the principal published sources for this chapter include the books already listed by E. G. C., Hiatt, Pemberton and Marguerite Steen. Among the sources used for background, I have drawn especially on Prof. Allardyce Nicoll's *A History of Late Nineteenth-Century Drama 1850-1900*, two volumes (1949).

1. When the children were very small, cradles were improvised for them in

the drawers of the chests of drawers common in Victorian bedrooms. The drawers were pulled out for the babies to sleep in.

2. See E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 44 and 54. In a later passage, p. 65, the younger daughters, Marion (Polly) and Floss (Florence), are referred to as attending school.
3. E.T. told her grandson, E.C., that her mother changed her name when she went on the stage in order to avoid offending her Scottish relations.
4. See Steen, *A Pride of Terrys*, p. 46.
5. See Nicoll, *op. cit.* I, pp. 45 *et seq.*
6. Kean's spectacular productions with their emphasis on archaeological exactness had been anticipated in certain of Macready's productions. Charles H. Shattuck has published a facsimile of Macready's prompt-book for his production of *King John* at Drury Lane in October 1842, together with the drawings and watercolours of the original designs for sets and costumes. The sets were designed by William Telbin under the influence of Clarkson Stanfield (1793-1867), the painter who also worked for the theatre; the drawings are preserved in the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington. The book, sponsored in 1962 by the University of Illinois Press, also contains for comparison reproductions of designs for Charles Kean's final London production of 1858. Telbin's designs to a large extent anticipate those created for Irving over thirty years later. I am grateful to Laurence Irving for help in the preparation of this note.
7. E.C. told me that E.T. taught him to dance the hornpipe in just the same spirit more than fifty years later.
8. E.T. would teach E.C. as a child to walk with a pack of cards stacked on his head.
9. See E.T., *Memoirs*, p. 18.
10. Hiatt says this accident took place not at the Princess's Theatre but when the company was on tour playing at the Theatre Royal, Manchester. But E.T. in her *Memoirs* implies it was at the Princess, since she adds: 'Mr Skey, of Bartholomew's Hospital, who chanced to be in a stall that very evening, came round behind the scenes and put my toe right. He remained my friend for life.' (p. 17).
11. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 28.
12. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 23.
13. For this and other reviews quoted see Pemberton, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-6, and Hiatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-4.
14. See *Charles Reade, a Memoir*, by Charles L. Reade and the Reverend Comp-ton Reade, Vol. II, p. 259.

15. See Steen, *op. cit.*, p. 71. The sum amounted probably to a few hundred pounds, though Fred Terry was to claim later that it was a few thousand pounds.
16. See E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 33-34. E.T. was, of course, 14 years old.

CHAPTER II: CHILD ACTRESS AND CHILD WIFE

Ellen Terry's *Memoirs* remain the principal source for this chapter, supplemented by the books of Pemberton and Hiatt. Godwin's life story has been told by Dudley Harbron in *The Conscious Stone* (1949), and the facts concerning Watts appear in Ronald Chapman's *The Laurel and the Thorn* (1945), supplemented by David Loshak's detailed study of E.T.'s relationship with Watts in an article published in *The Burlington Magazine* (November 1963). A useful background source for the whole Terry family at this time is the *Diaries of Lewis Carroll* (1953).

I am grateful to Wilfrid Blunt, the Curator of the Watts Gallery, and to Kerrison Preston, friend and literary executor of Graham Robertson, for the help and advice they have given me. There are important references to E.T.'s relations with both Watts and Godwin in Kerrison Preston's edition of the *Letters* Graham Robertson sent him (published 1953), as well as in the E.T.-Shaw *A Correspondence*.

1. E.T. in her *Memoirs* says she 'wore a short tunic which in those days was considered too scanty to be "quite nice"' when she appeared as Cupid (see p. 37).
2. Pemberton, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
3. See E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 35. The quotation that follows can be found on pp. 36-37.
4. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 38. E.T. was 15, not 16.
5. See Pemberton, *op. cit.*, p. 76. The quotation following is on p. 78.
6. There is a record, noted by Pemberton (*op. cit.*, p. 90) that she also appeared as Desdemona at the Princess's Theatre in June 1863. Othello, it appears, was played by Walter Montgomery.
7. See E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 50-52.
8. Watts painted a fine portrait of her around 1860, which can be seen at the Watts Gallery, Compton, Surrey. She appears proudly beautiful, a little contemptuous and rather aloof; Roger Fry regarded the portrait as one of the 'finest achievements of English art for all times'. During the same period

Mrs Thoby Prinsep posed for a picture which was called *In the Time of Georgione*; it is reproduced in Chapman's biography. It is characteristic that both these pictures remained unfinished for some thirty years, Watts only getting round to completing them in the 1890s. Nevertheless, the brief period of his marriage to E.T. was the start of what Wilfrid Blunt regards as his best period for portraiture.

9. Little Holland House had associations with Cromwell and, among others, with Caroline Fox, Macaulay, Coleridge and Jeremy Bentham.
10. Chapman, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
11. Chapman, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.
12. See E.T. *A Correspondence* with Shaw, p. 122. For the additional unpublished text I am grateful to E.C. E.T., of course, was nearly 17.
13. See *Letters of Graham Robertson*, p. 409, and Loshak, *The Burlington Magazine*, November 1963, p. 479, note 6. (See also Steen, *op. cit.*, p. 96.)
14. See E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 42. Among the many rumour-spreaders was Frank Harris, who wrote in *My Life and Loves*: 'What caused the rupture between them he never told me, and she was almost as reticent - though once she admitted that she "never loved Watts", which was perhaps confession enough. "He was charming," she said, "and I loved the pictures he made of me, but I never cared for him."' (Vol. V, Chap. XII.)
15. See Chapman, *op. cit.*, p. 67. For the marriage-night gossip, see Steen, *op. cit.*, p. 96.
16. All these pictures, as well as others, are reproduced in the *Burlington Magazine*, November 1963. See also Wilfrid Blunt's volume in the *Masters* series. The original of *Choosing* is in the possession of Kerrison Preston; *The Sisters* is owned by the Hon. Mrs E. Hervey-Bathurst. Graham Robertson, who first came to know E.T. when she was thirty-nine, received her confidence on certain matters connected with her private life. In his letters written many years later to Kerrison Preston he makes his own comments on her relation with Watts, whom he also knew well. He wrote to Kerrison Preston in 1939: 'If Watts thought he could mould that vital and radiant creature into what he wished her to be, he did not show much intelligence' (pp. 409-10). When in 1934 Kerrison Preston acquired Watts's portrait of E.T., *Choosing*, Graham Robertson wrote: 'It is a great joy to me that the picture has come to you. It was Ellen Terry's favourite of all the portraits painted of her. And I'm glad the Watts self-portrait hangs by it. They were much misrepresented to each other by kind friends, and they both knew it afterwards. But of course they could never have settled comfortably down together. To marry Ellen Terry was an absurd thing for any

man to do. He might as well marry the dawn or the twilight or any other evanescent and elusive loveliness of nature' (p. 316). In other letters he made other references to this picture. In 1938 he writes: '... that throat is Ellen Terry's throat, the eager, impulsive movement entirely hers, the whole thing inspired by her. When E.T. first told me about the picture, she called it "Choosing" and described the scentless camellias and the violets. She wanted to take me to see it, but we never made the visit' (p. 401). Also: 'It is curious that Watts, who apparently understood her so little, should have painted by far the truest portraits of E.T.' (p. 323). In another letter (p. 403) he states that many of the portraits of E.T. were not painted as such, but were subject pictures for which she acted as model.

17. This portrait, which is a distortion rather than a likeness of E.T.'s features, is preserved in the Print Room of the British Museum.
18. Quoted by Loshak in the *The Burlington Magazine* (Nov. 1963).
19. Quoted by Loshak from A. M. W. Stirling, *Life's Little Day* (1944), p. 219.
20. E.C. tells me this photograph was taken in the bathroom of Tennyson's house on the Isle of Wight.
21. E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 44-5.
22. *Diaries of Lewis Carroll*, Vol. I, p. 225.
23. E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 46-47.
24. See *The Heart of Ellen Terry*, p. 35. The friend was Stephen Coleridge (see page X).
25. See E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 47.

CHAPTER III: GODWIN

In addition to E.T.'s *Memoirs* and the biographies already cited, primary sources for this chapter include E.T.'s unpublished letters to Mary-Anne Hall preserved at the British Theatre Museum, the diaries of Lewis Carroll, E.G.C.'s *Index*, and Bancroft's *Recollections of Sixty Years* (1909). I have also drawn on the books by Marguerite Steen and Dudley Harbron already cited, Graham Robertson's *Time Was*, Alice Comyns-Carr's *Reminiscences*.

1. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 48.
2. This, and subsequent letters to Mary-Anne Hall, are all in the British Theatre Museum archive.
3. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 54. It is perhaps of some significance that in her own edition of *The Story of My Life* (the *Memoirs* in the form published during

her lifetime) preserved at Smallhythe, E.T. scribbled in the margin of p. 113 concerning Tom Taylor: 'Sweet fellow: Kate should tell of him for he cared for *her* more than he cared for me.'

4. In a letter to Mary-Anne Hall dated 6 June, E.T. refers briefly to this forthcoming single appearance.
5. I can find no satisfactory record of these appearances. Kate played her final London season at the Adelphi, so no doubt E.T. made her usual brief appearance in support of some benefit performance for her sister in both Bristol and London. But Marguerite Steen quotes an undated letter in which Polly and Nellie join to report to their mother on some engagement in the provinces with Ben. The town was probably Bristol, and the date presumably 20 February 1866. (See Steen, *op. cit.*, p. 107.)
6. Carroll, *op. cit.*, I, p. 233.
7. *Cox and Box* (originally called *Box and Cox*) by F. C. Burnand and Arthur Sullivan originated as an amateur production at Moray Lodge, the house which was to become Kate's home after her marriage to Arthur Lewis in October the same year.
8. Pemberton, *op. cit.*, p. 131.
9. In a letter dated 11 Jan. 1867 to Mary-Anne Hall, E.T. writes: 'Really dreadful cough . . . my "shrewishness" will be *tame* tonight.'
10. E.C. says that she undoubtedly did meet Godwin again at Little Holland House, and that E.T. could proudly claim him as her friend among the overwhelming number of cultured and famous people introduced by the Prinseps. But the old story accepted uncritically by Godwin's biographer, Dudley Harbron, and repeated by Marguerite Steen in *A Pride of Terrys*, which asserts that E.T. while still at Little Holland House deserted her husband to spend a night away nursing Godwin during an illness, appears to be so much moonshine. According to this account, E.T. was met on the mat in the morning by a reception party composed of Mrs Prinsep, Watts, and her father and mother, all of whom accused her of immoral behaviour. E.T.'s unusual life was to excite constant speculation in London society, and there were only too many people prepared to gossip about her and pass on their inventions about her private life. This particular story appears to have originated with Lady Duff Gordon, who in her book *Discretions and Indiscretions* (1932) claims that E.T. told her that Godwin 'had been on friendly terms with the family for years and both my husband and I were on terms of the most informal intimacy with him; we used to run in and out of his house whenever we wanted'. According to Lady Duff Gordon, E.T. told her that, after having been taken to task at Little Holland

House, Godwin became 'her only refuge, and I went back to his house'. Godwin had no residence in London during the period E.T. and Watts were married, and indeed his own wife was still alive and living with him in Bristol.

11. It could well be that this friend was not Godwin, but Charles Reade. This is the view of E.C. He considers that E.T.'s account implies, that her 'friend' was familiar with Paris and spoke French, whereas there is no evidence that Godwin had visited France before or knew the language. On the other hand, E.C. knows for a fact that E.T. went to Ireland with Godwin on one of his many professional visits to this country. Ellen would particularly value the opportunity to visit the home-country of the Irish.
12. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 65.
13. There is no reference in Lewis Carroll's diary to seeing E.T. again until her return to the stage in February 1874, but he kept in fairly close touch with both Stanhope Street and Moray Lodge, visiting both on occasion, going to the pantomime with Polly and Flo in January 1868, and to the Christie Minstrels with Sarah and the children in September the following year. Later he went several times to the theatre to see Flo and Polly (Marion) on the stage.
14. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 66.
15. According to Marguerite Steen, *op. cit.*, p. 124, Godwin was away from home at the time of the birth of his first child. The local doctor, Dr Rumball, delivered the child. His wife was later to become one of E.T.'s closest companions (see text, p. 79). According to Marguerite Steen, E.T. told her that she nearly left Godwin when he reproved her roughly for harnessing the pony when she was pregnant. (See Steen, *op. cit.*, p. 125.)
16. This work, carried out in the inadequate artificial light of the period, is believed to have been the initial cause of E.T.'s severe eye trouble in later life. See page 75.
17. Robertson, *Time Was*, pp. 140-1. The quotations that follow are at pp. 142 and 143. Robertson also quotes a letter from E.T. in which she rejoices in being able to share her experience of moonlight with her grandson, Little Teddy: 'Good Lord, that November moon! I had to pull little Teddy out of his bed one night so that he should not miss the teeming loveliness. His face in the pale light I shall never forget. The delicacy of it - so grave and so adoring! His morning reading has been a great bond between us, but the Moon - He made me promise to wake him up once a month to see the sight' (p. 143). E.C. remembers these moonlight experiences vividly; they often had to be kept secret from Edy.

18. E.T. seems to imply that she attended the village church at Fallows Green. This she could do under her 'guise' of being Mrs Godwin. But in later life she was never to be a churchgoer, though she believed in God, kept a Bible by her and read such books of religious meditation as that by Thomas à Kempis, whom she called by the pet name Kempy. Godwin used to practise on the organ in the church at Harpenden, and had an organ installed in his house. E.C. tells me there was a monkey kept at Harpenden which would sit on Godwin's foot when his legs were crossed.
19. The conversation is recorded by E.T. herself. (See *Memoirs*, p. 69.)
20. See E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 70. Marguerite Steen, without giving her source, says the whole family openly moved to London. But E.C. has told me of certain letters, now destroyed, which E.T. sent from London to Harpenden addressed to a Miss Bindloss, who was at this time governess to the children. The letters were full of distressing references to Godwin and to E.T.'s difficult situation. The Bindloss letters were destroyed by her nephew, a clergyman, as he thought them of too private a nature to preserve.
21. See E.T., *op. cit.*, pp. 78-81; the passages following, giving Reade's view of E.T. and hers of him, appear on pages 75 and 71 respectively of the *Memoirs*. The Reade letters are still preserved in the archives at Smallhythe; some are signed 'Papa'. E.T.'s personal copy of Reade's biography referred to is in the library at Smallhythe.
22. See Forbes-Robertson, *Under Three Reigns*, pp. 66-7.
23. E.G.C. in his various books always expresses great antipathy to Reade, largely because of Reade's known antipathy to Godwin. For the relations between E.T. and Mrs Scymour, see E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 85. She 'liked' Mrs Seymour.
24. See Hiatt, *op. cit.*, p. 20. Cp. *Mr and Mrs Bancroft on and off the Stage* (1889), p. 208.
25. Bancroft divided the play into seven scenes to avoid a set-change in view of the audience. The scenes were: Under the arches of the Doge's Palace; Belmont; Lanes in Venice (morning); Lanes in Venice (evening); Belmont; the Sala della Bussola; a Garden. During the intervals between these scenes, views of Venice, painted by Gordon, were displayed. (See *Mr and Mrs Bancroft*, p. 211.)

Godwin's article on the architecture and décor for *The Merchant of Venice* was reprinted by his son, Gordon Craig, in a double issue of his journal, *The Mask*, May-June 1908. This article (there was a second on costume) was originally published in 1875 in *The Architect*. It began with an analysis of the double plot of the play which, Godwin maintained, should

be treated as taking place contemporaneously with the composition of the play, namely during the 1590s. Architectural ground-plans are given for a public place in Venice incorporating the exterior of Shylock's house, a hall of Justice in the Doge's Palace, and a stateroom in Portia's house at Belmont.

Godwin goes on to determine the exact appearance of houses and palaces in Venice in the 1590s, and how any scene-painter should seek to represent the city. He then explains how each element making up his sets should correspond to Venetian originals. He thinks, for example, bearing in mind the delimitation of a stage, the Court of Justice would be more appropriately based on the relatively small Sala dello Scrutinio in the Doge's Palace than on the great Sala del Maggior Consiglio. In the trial scene, he considers the disposal of the groups surrounding the plaintiff and defendant as well as the Doge and his fellow dignitaries, and how their seats and other furnishings should be devised, down to the smallest detail: the bond, the scales, the knife, etc. The trial, in other words, is not treated as a theatrical fantasy but considered as actually taking place in the Venice of the 1590s. For Portia's room, he refers the scene painter for details to the paintings of such artists as Ghirlandaio and Bazzi, and considers in great detail an ornate contemporary design for the caskets.

In the subsequent article on costume, he describes Portia's dresses with great care. Among the points he makes are: 'Portia would do her shopping in Padua, and would therefore follow the fashions of the mainland. The chief difference we have to note is the absence of the square-cut body. High-necked bodies, with fine cambric ruffs, was the everyday attire usually worn by Paduan ladies of noble birth. . . . There is also a marked difference to be observed between the dresses of a maiden and that of a married woman, and there is no question that the Paduan ladies (wives or not) indulged in a considerably extensive wardrobe. So, too, there was more than one mode of dressing the hair . . . Rings were worn on the first, third and fourth fingers.' And so on.

26. Pemberton, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

27. Alice Comyns-Carr, *Reminiscences*, p. 31. Beerbohm Tree's reaction, recorded in his diary, is interesting. 'I cannot understand how she can smile so naturally. Her by-play was marvellous. She looked like one of Leighton's women, queen-like. In the trial scene she astonished me by putting on the manners of a youth . . . like a young barrister of the present day.' See Hesketh Pearson, *Beerbohm Tree* (1956), p. 11.

28. E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 86-7.

29. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 89.
30. See Terry-Shaw, *A Correspondence*, p. xxxii.
31. E.G.C. *Index*, p. 21.
32. This letter, preserved in the archive at Smallhythe, is addressed to 'Dear old Bobbie' and written from Barkston Gardens on 8 September 1890. The recipient is marked in the handwriting of Christopher St John - 'an old friend'. The singleness of E.T.'s love for Godwin is also referred to in a letter from Graham Robertson to Kerrison Preston written in 1931: 'Though I know most people would not think so, Ellen Terry was a "one man" woman. She loved (in the true sense of the word) one man only - and for ever' (*Letters*, p. 260).
33. Divorce in England before 1857 was only possible by a private Act of Parliament. By the Marriage Act of that date a petition for divorce could be submitted to the civil courts and, if granted, took six months to be declared absolute. Legal costs were high at this time.
34. E.T., like all players, was always ready to help her fellows by appearing in their benefit performances. On 1 March 1877 she took part in a performance of part of Lytton's play *Money* for the benefit of Henry Compton, and on 20 June she appeared at the Gaiety as Lady Teazle in *The School for Scandal* for the benefit of Charles Lamb Kenney. (See Hiatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-4, and Pemberton, *op. cit.*, p. 161.)
35. Terry-Shaw *Correspondence*, p. xxxii.
36. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 116.
37. E.G.C. *Index*, p. 49.
38. See E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 118.

CHAPTER IV: THE LYCEUM

In addition to the books by E.T., E.G.C., Hiatt, Pemberton and Graham Robertson already cited, in this and succeeding chapters I have drawn continuously on Laurence Irving's biography, *Henry Irving*. I have also used Bram Stoker's *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving*, A. E. Wilson's *The Lyceum*, Henry James's *The Scenic Art*, Allardyce Nicoll's *A History of Late Nineteenth Century Drama* and Clement Scott's *Drama of Yesterday and Today*, among many other books.

1. He adopted the name partly in tribute to one of his favourite authors,

Washington Irving, and partly in recognition of the Northumbrian preacher, Edward Irving. (See Irving, *op. cit.*, p. 62.)

2. After Irving's death, a photograph of Nellie Moore was found in his pocketbook pasted back-to-back with a portrait of himself taken in 1868.
3. Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, p. 308. The letter is dated 25 August 1878. The 'half-clear' benefit in the terms settled with Irving means E.T. was to receive half the takings of a benefit performance during the season, clear of any deductions.
4. E.T. *Memoirs*, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
5. For example, Lewis Carroll in his *Diaries*, Vol. II, p. 377, says: 'Irving rather spoiled Hamlet by his extraordinary English.' For discussion of Irving's manner of speech see James, *The Scenic Art*, p. 139, E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 123, E.G.C.'s *Henry Irving*, pp. 62-9, and Laurence Irving's *Henry Irving*, p. 284.
6. James, *op. cit.*, p. 139.
7. E.T., *op. cit.*, p. 106. For the quotation that follows below, see pp. 119-20. For E.T.'s ambitions for herself, see also p. 100 and p. 120.
8. For E.T.'s interest in lighting, see Chapter V, p. 146.
9. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 131.
10. E.G.C., *Irving*, pp. 58-61.
11. For the amusing story of Irving purloining for himself the cloak that E.T. had hoped to wear, see E.T., *op. cit.*, p. 123.
12. Pemberton, *op. cit.*, p. 225.
13. Kelly only appeared at the Lyceum with E.T. once, in a benefit performance for a sick actor, Henry Marston. For this and other facts concerning the provincial tours see Hiatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 123, 130-2, 147.
14. They also appeared together in a single performance of the first act of *Richard III* on 25 July 1879 on the occasion of Irving's 'benefit'. E.T. played the Lady Anne, and Irving, of course, Gloucester. This first season benefit brought him £250, and that for E.T. £233. See Chapter V, Note 4. After the theatre was enlarged, E.T.'s benefits materially increased. In later years she records getting £430 from a single benefit. See Terry-Shaw *A Correspondence*, p. 296.
15. James, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
16. Stoker, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 170.
17. This privately printed copy of *Charles I* is preserved at Smallhythe.
18. Hiatt, *op. cit.*, p. 128.
19. For a very full description of Irving's performance as Shylock, see Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, pp. 339-444.

20. Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.
21. Kate Terry Gielgud, *Autobiography*, p. 90.
22. James, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-4.
23. Hiatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 137-8.
24. Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, p. 346.

CHAPTER V: THE NEW LIFE

In addition to the books by E.T. and E.G.C. already cited, I have drawn for this chapter on Laurence Irving's *Henry Irving*, Henry James's *The Scenic Art*, Coquelin's *The Art of the Actor* (1894; translated into English 1932), Frank Benson's *Memoirs* and Martin Harvey's *Autobiography*.

1. E.G.C. *Index*, p. 182.
2. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 149.
3. E.G.C. *Ellen Terry and Her Secret Self*, p. 14.
4. Laurence Irving has presented a set of the regular Lyceum account sheets prepared by Bram Stoker for his grandfather to the British Theatre Museum. An undated example that went astray is discussed by Maurice Willson Disher in *The Last Romantic*, p. 96; this shows E.T. to be earning £200 a week. It is difficult to determine exactly when E.T. was promoted to this high salary, plus the seasonal benefits, since the company's salaries were normally totalled together. But it would seem just to assume that she reached this level early in the 1880s when the success of the Lyceum was fully established and she was free of her separate provincial tours with Kelly. Her annual income must have been in the neighbourhood of £9,000 a year throughout the 1880s and 1890s.
5. E.G.C. *Ellen Terry*, p. 22.
6. See the note to this effect by Christopher St John and Edith Craig, E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 185. Also see p. 139, quoting E.T.'s letter to Shaw. E.T. calls Kelly 'a male Julia' (*Correspondence*, p. 137); for the significance of this, see below Chapter IX, note 1.
7. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 113.
8. See E.T. *Memoirs* pp. 116-17 and the Terry-Shaw *A Correspondence* (p. 137) for the comments on Kelly made in this paragraph.
9. E.G.C. *Ellen Terry*, p. 9. E.G.C. says Rose Cottage was given up round 1880. It may not have been given up quite so soon as this. See E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 163.
10. E.T.'s letters, apart from those to Shaw have yet to be collected and pub-

lished. This will be a considerable task. There are many still in private hands, many in public collections (for example, at the British Theatre Museum and at Smallhythe). Some have been sold to America, and a collection of letters primarily to Laurence and Mabel. Irving were formerly in the possession of Bernard Miles. The great collection written to Stephen Coleridge, which he claims amounted to fourteen bound volumes, were the source for the only others so far published; these appear in *The Heart of Ellen Terry*, published in 1928 shortly after her death. Some of these are quoted later in this paragraph. The volume contained only twenty-six letters. The Hon. Stephen Coleridge was the son of the Lord Chief Justice and became E.G.C.'s godfather, much to Ted's distaste. (See E.G.C. *Index*, pp. 59-60, 66.) The artists, Ella and Nelia Casella and Ellaline Terriss, daughter of William Terriss, were also amongst E.T.'s regular correspondents.

11. Cited by E.G.C. *Ellen Terry*, p. 49.
12. E.G.C. *Ellen Terry*, p. 10.
13. Inspired by Laurence Irving (*op. cit.*, p. 673; cp. Pemberton *op. cit.*, pp. 22-3), I have made an attempt to trace the 'lineage' in British acting from the time of Shakespeare to that of Irving and E.T. See page 102.
14. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 134.
15. James, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-3.
16. Coquelin, *The Art of the Actor*, p. 31. For next quotation see p. 78. For Coquelin's observations on E.T., see Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, p. 327.
17. James, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-9.
18. See Chapter VIII pp. 224-5 for amusing accounts of Bernhardt being entertained by Irving in the Beefsteak Room at the Lyceum, see Alice Comyns-Carr, *op. cit.*, p. 217, and E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 168. According to Alice Comyns-Carr: 'Brilliant and interesting companion that the Divine Sarah was, her views and her illustrations of them were not always in what more prudish English people considered good taste. Indeed, in her choice of examples she was sometimes like a fishwife.' Graham Robertson, who became a close friend of Bernhardt in spite of the difference in their ages, describes her in great detail in *Time Was*. E.G.C. claimed that 'her methods were quite Irvingesque' and that this 'suited her'.
19. This description was Oscar Wilde's.
20. Hiatt, *op. cit.*, p. 164. The Meinigen company, their *ensemble* productions forecasting one work of the Moscow Arts Theatre, had appeared in London in 1881.
21. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 167.
22. E.T. (*Memoirs*, p. 171) recalls it as the *Electra*. But see Benson *Memoirs*, pp.

117, 151. For Benson's recollections of meeting E.T. at the Lyceum, see p. 129.

23. See Martin Harvey, *Autobiography*, pp. 92-3.

CHAPTER VI: NORTH AMERICA

In this chapter, in addition to the E.T. *Memoirs* and Laurence Irving's *Henry Irving*, I have drawn primarily on Joseph Hatton's book, *Henry Irving's Impressions of America* (1884), which was so successful it had to be reissued in a cheap edition. Lengthy extracts from reviews of the Lyceum productions by the American press appeared regularly in the *Illustrated London News* in what would be called now 'advertisers announcements'. In other words, they were paid insertions to keep the British public informed of the Company's progress during their first visit to the United States.

1. See below, Chapter X, p. 302. The later American tours which E.T. undertook with Irving are listed in Note 29 of Chapter VII. In addition to these official tours, E.T. made private visits to the United States, and toured on her own account. See below, Chapter X, pp. 313, 315.
2. For this and the quotation from the *Tribune*, see Hatton, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-8.
3. Hatton, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-7.
4. E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 202-3.
5. Hatton, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
6. Hatton, *op. cit.*, p. 118.
7. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 223.
8. Hatton, *op. cit.*, p. 237.
9. Hatton, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-7.
10. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 220.
11. Hatton, *op. cit.*, p. 221.
12. Hatton, *op. cit.*, p. 324.
13. Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, p. 449.
14. Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, p. 450.

CHAPTER VII: SHAKESPEARE, MY SWEETHEART

The principal sources for this chapter are the E.T. *Memoirs*, the books already cited by Hiatt, Pemberton, E.G.C., Laurence Irving, Graham Robertson and Alice Comyns-Carr. I have also drawn on E.T.'s unpublished notes on *Macbeth*

preserved at Smallhythe, and on her published *Four Lectures on Shakespeare* (1932).

1. See Alice Comyns-Carr, *op. cit.*, p. 155 for this quotation and the one immediately below.
2. Quoted by Hiatt, *op. cit.*, p. 188-9.
3. A week earlier, on 1 June, another special matinée was staged. This was Byron's *Werner*, in which Ellen appeared as Josephine. Irving played Werner.
4. According to Alice Comyns-Carr, Irving went to Paris with her husband on a number of occasions. One of Irving's favourite pastimes was to visit the Morgue to watch the reactions of the men and women who were brought in to inspect the dead bodies. Joe, however, insisted on taking Irving to the Moulin Rouge.
5. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 231.
6. Sarah Siddons's observations on Lady Macbeth were originally published by her biographer Thomas Campbell. See *Life of Mrs Siddons* (1834), Vol. II, pp. 10-34.
7. E.T.'s notes on the essay in the *Westminster Review* are preserved at the British Theatre Museum in a specially bound copy of the article. See also Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, p. 500.
8. For Irving's two letters quoted here, see E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 232-3.
9. Quoted in Hiatt, *op. cit.*, p. 202.
10. Alice Comyns-Carr, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-12.
11. Alice Comyns-Carr, *op. cit.*, pp. 299-300.
12. See Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, p. 504.
13. See Hiatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 206 *et seq.* for the reviews quoted.
14. I am grateful to Mrs Molly Thomas, Curator at Smallhythe, for discovering this letter.
15. See Hesketh Pearson, *The Life of Oscar Wilde* (Penguin edition), p. 120. The Sargent portrait, which was owned initially by Irving, hung in the Beefsteak Room at the Lyceum when it was not on loan for public exhibition. After Irving's death it was auctioned at Christie's and bought by Sir Joseph Duveen and presented to the Tate Gallery. For the sketches made by Sargent, see E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 248.
16. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 245. The letters to Amy Dickens are preserved at the British Theatre Museum.
17. Twelve, if the single appearance as the Lady Anne in *Richard III* be included.
18. E.T. *Lectures*, pp. 130-1.

19. For the elaborate preparations for the décor of this production of *Henry VIII* under the supervision of Seymour Lucas, see Bram Stoker, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 113 *et seq.* Cp. E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 240-1.
20. *The Heart of Ellen Terry*, p. 49.
21. Graham Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 287.
22. Hiatt, *op. cit.*, p. 242.
23. Graham Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
24. E.G.C. *Index*, p. 128.
25. Terry-Shaw, *A Correspondence*, p. xxxvii.
26. Miss Maud Gibson of Tenterden recollects the gusto with which E.T. spat on the iron. Then she would look up at Maud in the box near the proscenium and wink, because Maud's mother had told her to be sure and spit on the iron like a professional washerwoman.
27. See Bram Stoker, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 261 *et seq.* for Irving's devices for concealing his height and for 'fleshing' and dressing the part of the Emperor.
28. These Command performances are described by Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, pp. 512, 582 and 585. Irving played *Waterloo* before King Edward VII in 1902. See also E.G.C. *Index* p. 143. Perhaps the most entertaining account from the point of view of E.T.'s participation in these Command entertainments is that for 1889 written by Bram Stoker, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 213 *et seq.*
29. Provincial tours took place in 1891, 1894, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900 and 1902, all with E.T. participating.
30. A summary of the facts concerning the later American tours, derived from Laurence Irving's biography, is as follows:

Tour of 1893-4:

Starts on 4 September at the Grand Opera House, San Francisco. Other places included were Portland, Seattle, Tacoma, Minneapolis, Chicago (when the World Fair was taking place), New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, and cities in Canada. The plays included *Becket*, *Henry VIII*, *Nance Oldfield* and *The Bells*. The Company returned to London in time to start the new season at the Lyceum in April with revivals of *Becket* and *Faust*. The profits from this tour were £24,330.

Tour of 1895-6:

Starts on 16 September at the Academy of Music, Montreal. Other places (often involving two separate visits) included Toronto, Boston, New York, St Louis, Baltimore, Philadelphia (where Duse was also playing), New Orleans, Memphis (including an adventurous journey across the Mississippi floods), Cincinnati (where Henry Howe died at the age of eighty-four).

The tour involved some dozen productions, including *Faust*. The Company returned in May. The profits this time were barely £6,000.

Tour of 1899-1900:

Starts on 30 October at the Knickerbocker Theatre, New York. The tour included some thirty cities in the United States and Canada, including Baltimore, Brooklyn and Cleveland. Irving toured five productions, *Robespierre*, *The Bells*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Louis XI* and *Madame Sans-Gêne*. The profits to Irving personally amounted to £24,000. Irving had undertaken five weeks' provincial tour of Britain before the American tour, and followed it on his return in May by further provincial tours later in the year.

Tour of 1901-02:

Starts on 21 October at the Knickerbocker Theatre, New York. Irving was back in Britain in time for a season in London starting in April. The productions given in America included *Charles I*. The profits to Irving personally amounted to £12,000.

Irving's final tour in the United States was undertaken without E.T. in 1903.

31. Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, pp. 640-1.
32. Even during the period she played Mrs Page for Beerbohm Tree E.T. continued to appear for matinees at the Lyceum of *The Merchant of Venice* and *Charles I*. Of all the plays, only *The Merchant of Venice* enjoyed an unflagging success. This Irving and E.T. played with great popularity for over twenty years.

CHAPTER VIII: QUEEN OF EVERY WOMAN

In addition to the E.T. *Memoirs* and the works of E.G.C., I have also drawn for this chapter on the books already cited by Bram Stoker, Graham Robertson, Alice Comyns-Carr and Marguerite Steen, and on Lena Ashwell's *Myself a Player*. I have also used the collections of E.T.'s letters preserved at Smalhythe, the British Theatre Museum (B.T.M.), and in the Enthoven Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum, as well as those published in *The Heart of Ellen Terry*.

1. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 194.
2. This letter is part of the Morris Collection at the British Theatre Museum.
3. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 196.
4. For the relations of Mrs Godwin and Whistler, see James Laver's biography

of Whistler (Penguin edition, 1942), p. 129. Godwin's funeral, according to Laver, 'was turned into a kind of picnic. Whistler, Mrs Godwin, and Lady Archibald Campbell attended it, riding in a country wagon, and the second lady was quick to notice that her companions already seemed very fond of one another.'

5. Letter in the Morris Collection, B.T.M. It is addressed to 'Georgina'.
6. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 243.
7. Alice Comyns-Carr, *op. cit.*, p. 216.
8. Graham Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 293.
9. All these letters to Mrs Nettleship are preserved in the Enthoven Collection. E.G.C. writes of his mother's attitude to dress: 'She never looked on herself as clever or as a beauty, so she was never vain, and ever lovely. She liked to dress well, but liked her dresses not to irk her – they had to be easy – so that she was on the side of untidy, preferring that to being too spick and span. She never fussed about her appearance' (*Index*, p. 131.)
10. The letters to Bertha Bramly are preserved at Smallhythe.
11. Written during a provincial tour with Irving giving recitals from *Macbeth*.
12. Another hand (probably Mrs Bramly's) has noted the three plays to be *Cymbeline*, *Olivia*, and *Madame Sans-Gêne*.
13. Irving was convalescing in Bournemouth after contracting pleurisy and pneumonia while on tour in Glasgow. Frank Tyars took over to complete the tour. See Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, p. 623.
14. The letters to Amy and Enid Dickens are preserved in the Morris Collection at the B.T.M.
15. See Hesketh Pearson, *The Life of Oscar Wilde* (Penguin edition) pp. 303 and 327, and Steen, *op. cit.*, p. 206.
16. A copy of Wilde's play *Vera*, which he had privately printed in 1880, is preserved at Smallhythe. It is inscribed: 'For Miss Ellen Terry from her sincere admirer, the Author.' A letter accompanies it (undated) from Tite St: 'Dear Miss Ellen Terry, Will you accept the First copy of my First play – a drama on modern Russia – perhaps one day I shall be fortunate enough to write something worthy of you playing. We all miss you so much, and are so jealous that the provinces should see you in all the great parts you are playing before we do – so please come back quite soon. Believe me, Yours sincerely, Oscar Wilde.'
17. Alice Comyns-Carr, *op. cit.*, pp. 209–10.
18. In a British Theatre Museum exhibition, 1966, a letter was on loan from the Belmore family revealing that E.T. had made a gift in 1893 to George Belmore, a member of Irving's company, when he had been robbed.

19. I am grateful to Laurence Irving for giving me the text of this letter prior to its publication in his book, *The Successors*.
20. See Lena Ashwell, *Myself a Player*, pp. 54-5.
21. Both letters are preserved at Smalhythe. Dame May Whitty and her husband Ben Webster were friends both of Ellen and Edy. They helped with the production of *Godefroi and Yolande* in Chicago during the 1895-6 American tour. Later, Dame May wrote the following just before her death: 'Ellen Terry had promised Sir Henry's son, Laurence, that during the tour she would produce his play *Godfroi and Yolande*, based on Swinburne's poem of *The Leper*, which in turn was adapted from an old French legend. Sir Henry was definitely against it - "an unpleasant subject - we have a repertory of fourteen plays - surely enough work!" But Ellen was determined; she had promised. She enlisted the help of many of the company, and, rather reluctantly, the stage hands. Luckily for this enterprise there were few if any unions in those days. Edy devised the scenery, the clothes, the effects; it had to be done with very little expenditure, and she gathered up the scenery from odd bits from the other plays, also costumes which she seemed to transform into something quite different. Ellen Terry made her first entrance along a balcony at the back of the scene leading to a flight of steps where she stood clad in a scarlet gown, part of her Portia dress - completely changed - scarlet flowers in her red hair, an absolutely white face, those strange eyes and her beautiful mouth that so easily took on the lines of the tragic mask. I, as a lady-in-waiting, had to follow, but I remember standing there transfixed by her strange loveliness, and the scene itself so rich, so beautifully composed. We played the play in Chicago, and as far as I can remember it met with much enthusiasm, and we repeated it several times' (*Edy*, p. 52).

In 1897, Laurence Irving wrote his melancholy play *Peter the Great* and through this joined the Lyceum company. The play, though heavy, was sufficiently worthy to attract some praise, even from Bernard Shaw, though E.T. disliked her part in it. Laurence Irving proved sufficiently capable an actor to take his father's place upon the stage when he had lost his voice, playing the Czar before the Prince and Princess of Wales, though Shaw was not at all impressed. The play lasted only for thirty-eight performances. Laurence translated *Robespierre* for his father and once more, when his health failed, took his place upon the stage.

22. See E.G.C., *Ellen Terry*, pp. 85-7 for a description of how E.G.C. and his mother used to travel together to the theatre.
23. Some of these letters appear in E.G.C.'s *Index*, as follows: letter of 16

December 1885, p. 67; of November 1888, p. 87; of 3 June 1891, p. 125; and of 12 June 1891, pp. 126-7. The originals of all these letters, initially in the possession of E.G.C., are now in private ownership in the United States. The original of the letter dated 7 June is in the possession of E.C., and I am grateful to him for permission to reproduce it. The undated fragment seemingly written from Dublin is at Smallhythe. Also preserved at Smallhythe is a bound copy of the Lyceum *Hamlet*, inscribed: 'My fairest - sweetest loveliest Ophelia. Only this, *Your Hamlet*.'

24. This letter is preserved in the Morris Collection, B.T.M.

25. Marguerite Steen in *A Pride of Terrys* feels that she has proved that E.T. was Irving's mistress, yet the only hard evidence she produces is the remarks E.T. made to her when she was the ageing actress's youthful companion. Of these, the principal is as follows: 'The conversation had turned on some troublesome affair of my own, and led to my asking Ellen point-blank whether she had ever been Irving's mistress. She answered without hesitation. "Of course I was. We were terribly in love for a while. Then, later on, when it didn't matter so much to me, he wanted us to go on, and so I did, because I was very, very fond of him and he said he needed me."' As against this, both E.C. and Laurence Irving, grandsons of the persons involved and steeped in the history of their respective families, are convinced to the contrary. So are others of the Terry family, including Olive Chaplin, E.T.'s niece, who was for a while Curator at Smallhythe.

E.T. was always reticent about her private life and probably spoke most intimately about it to Elena Meo, the mother of Nelly and Edward Craig, during the years they lived together. It is scarcely characteristic that she would speak more openly to her young friend, and I am inclined to think that she meant no more than that Irving and she were 'lovers', and much together, but *not* that she had at any period actually *consummated* the relationship. But that they indulged in minor physical intimacies does not seem to be in doubt. E.C. remembers her telling him that on one occasion when Irving's feet were cold she let him warm them back to life by holding them to her stomach under her dress.

All that arises from this is that we must wait for incontrovertible evidence before stating that E.T. was actually Irving's mistress in the fullest sense as distinct from being his close and affectionate companion.

26. Laurence Irving tells me that for a while during the 1880s his grandfather conducted continuous, discreet negotiations to achieve legal separation from his intransigent wife. It is of interest to note that the garden at the

- Grange was, according to Christopher St John, 'Laid out on the lines of Ellen Terry's garden at Harpenden.' See E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 195.
27. See E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 269-74.
 28. See also passage from Terry-Shaw *A Correspondence*, pp. 387-8, quoted below, p. 273.
 29. This pencil draft is preserved in a notebook at the B.T.M.
 30. See Laurence Irving *op. cit.*, p. 595 and Lena Ashwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-7.
 31. Marguerite Steen quotes this figure without giving a source. See *A Pride of the Terrys*, p. 257.
 32. E.C. tells me that E.T. paid her son's alimony to May Gibson for the rest of her life. It was reduced only in 1921, when E.T.'s financial affairs underwent a drastic overhaul. She also made E.G.C. an allowance of some £2 or £3 a week most of the time, at least in the later years before and during the war.
 33. See E.T. *Memoirs* p. 86, and Laurence Irving, *op. cit.*, pp. 643-4. According to Oscar Asche in his *Life*, he was responsible for the initial suggestion that E.T. and Madge Kendal should appear together, and he meant it as a joke. Tree, however, was taken with the idea, but was careful to give Madge Kendal the first choice of part (see p. 101).
 34. *The Heart of Ellen Terry*, p. 61.
 35. E.T. *Memoirs*, p. 259.
 36. E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 261-2. In her edition of *The Story of my Life* preserved at Smallhythe, E.T. wrote in the margin on p. 338 beside this account of her visit to Irving: 'We were both gravely smiling all the while - and both spoke very slowly - very quietly.' Of Irving she also wrote in this book: 'I doted on his looks.'
 37. Stoker, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 357-8.
 38. E.T. *op. cit.*, p. 263. E.T. was on tour in Manchester in Barrie's *Alice-sit-by-the-Fire* at the time of Irving's death. Laurence Irving tells me the news was broken to her by Hilda Trevelyan the following morning in her hotel. James Agate (*Ego*, p. 146) claims to have seen E.T. break down during her performance in Manchester that night when she had to speak the line, 'I had a beautiful husband once.' After attending the funeral service at Westminster Abbey, E.T. had to return to Manchester for the evening performance. She travelled with Martin-Harvey and his wife, Eleanor da Silva. Apparently E.T. was 'like a cat on hot bricks', reacting against any direct expression of emotion. She seemed 'wildly elated'. (See Maurice Disher, *The Last Romantic*, p. 176.) In E.T.'s copy of *Becket* at Smallhythe she wrote against Becket's final line, 'Into Thy hands, O

Lord, into Thy hands!', her own comment: 'The *last words* spoken by Henry Irving – on the stage – at Bradford Theatre.' When asked by an interviewer what she felt after Irving's funeral, E.T. said: 'He was a great actor, a great friend and a good man. What more is there to say?' (See *We Saw Him Act*, p. 250.)

Additional Note to Chapter VIII. According to Charles Tennyson in his biography of Lord Tennyson, his grandfather saw much of E.T. during the autumn and winter of 1890–91. She sent him a New Year greeting in which she called him the King of Poets and thanked God he was alive whilst she and her children lived. When he died in October 1892, she attended the funeral service in Westminster Abbey with Irving. That night, she wrote of Tennyson in her diary: 'His majestic life and death spoke of him better than the service . . . The music was poor and dull and weak, while he was *strong*. The triumphant should have been the sentiment expressed. . . . No face there looked anything by the side of Henry's. . . . He looked very pale and slim and wonderful.'

CHAPTER IX: SHAW

The principal source for this chapter is naturally the Terry-Shaw *A Correspondence* (1931), edited with notes and comments by Christopher St John and Bernard Shaw. Details of Shaw's life come from his *Sixteen Self Sketches*, from his principal biographers, Frank Harris (writing in 1931), Archibald Henderson (writing finally in 1932), Hesketh Pearson (1942) and St John Ervine (1956), and from C.G.L. Du Cann's *The Loves of Bernard Shaw* (1963). I am indebted to Laurence Irving for certain other biographical facts.

1. Jenny Patterson, who died in 1924, has been identified with Blanche Sartorius in *Widowers' Houses* and Julia Craven in *The Philanderer*. (Hence E.T.'s reference to Kelly as 'a male Julia', *A Correspondence*, p. 137). Grace Tranfield is equated with Florence Farr. According to *The Serpent's Eye*, Shot-over in *Heartbreak House* was Shaw's conception of Godwin (see foreword by Cecil Lewis to this book by Donald P. Costello of Notre Dame, Indiana). Annie Besant was said to be the model for Raina in *Arms and the Man* and for Mrs Clandon in *You Never Can Tell*.
2. *et seq.* Terry-Shaw *A Correspondence*. The quotations that follow with reference numbers occur on the following pages: 2, pp. 14–16; 3, p. 16; 5,

- p. xxxix; 6, p. 44; 7, p. 88; 8, p. 228; 9, p. 192; 10, p. 57; 11, p. 65; 12, p. 73; 13, p. 204; 14, p. 299; 15, p. 373; 16, p. 29; 17, p. 338; 18, p. 107; 19, p. 165; 20, p. 60; 21, p. 196; 22, p. 199; 23, p. 194; 24, p. 276; 25, p. 303; 26, p. 309; 27, p. 324; 28, pp. 369-70; 29, pp. 370-1; 30, p. 291; 31, p. 301; 32, p. 345; 33, pp. 265-6; 34, p. 151; 35, pp. 96-7; 36, pp. 98-9 (in this letter, 'my Irish lady' is Charlotte Frances Payne-Townshend, who later became Mrs Bernard Shaw, and Janet is the actress Janet Achurch); 37, pp. 253-4; 38, pp. 82-3; 39, p. 215; 40, p. 389; 41, p. 71; 42, p. 216-17; 43, p. 256; 44, p. 313; 45, p. 45; 46, p. 84; 47, p. 100; 48, p. 110; 49, pp. 120-1; 50, pp. 123-4; 51, p. 209; 52, p. 224; 53, p. 257.
4. During the period of his relationship with E.T. Shaw wrote, in addition to *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1891), his articles for the *Saturday Review* (1895-8), *Widowers' Houses* (produced in 1892), *The Philanderer* and *Mrs Warren's Profession* (1893; both banned by the censor), *Arms and the Man* and *Candida* (1894), *The Sanity of Art* (1895) and *The Man of Destiny* (1895), *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant* (published in 1898, and including in two volumes, in addition to the above plays, *You Never Can Tell*), *The Devil's Disciple* (1896), *Captain Brassbound's Conversion* and *Caesar and Cleopatra* were completed before the end of the decade.
 54. I am grateful to Laurence Irving for letting me have the text of this letter which was omitted from the published correspondence, but privately printed.
 55. Shaw, *Pen Portraits and Reviews*, p. 165.
 56. Shaw, *Pen Portraits and Reviews*, p. 167.

CHAPTER X: THE SECRET SELF

The principal sources for this chapter, in addition to the books by E.T. and E.G.C., are the Terry-Shaw *A Correspondence*, Shaw's *Dramatic Opinions and Essays*, *Edy* (edited by Eleanor Adlard), *Wings of Fire* by Frances Winwar, *Time Was* and *Letters* by Graham Robertson, and Marguerite Steen's *A Pride of Terrys*. The E.T. *Memoirs* finish at 1906, but are continued in biographical form by Edith Craig and Christopher St John in the 1933 edition. E.T.'s Jubilee was commemorated in a special hard-backed illustrated book which acted also as a programme and gave many details concerning her career as well as listing the many contributors to the performance at Drury Lane. For personal information concerning this period I am specially indebted to Edward Craig from whom many of the details in this chapter derive. I am also grateful to Kerrison

Preston, Joan Morgan, Colin Ford of the National Film Archive, John M. East, and to Laurence Irving for help over points of detail.

1. Sudermann's *Heimat* (*Home*), called in English *Magda*, the name of the principal character, concerns a girl whose father has turned her out of his house for defying his authority. Her final success as a singer is preceded by a period of misfortune as an unmarried mother whose lover has deserted her. Later, when she is famous, she revisits her home only to find her former lover has become a friend of the family. In the final act she is confronted by him.
2. See Shaw, *Dramatic Opinions and Essays* (Constable, 1913, Vol. I, pp. 136-8) for this and the quotation that follows.
3. See Duse's correspondence with E.T. in the *Memoirs*, p. 183. E.T.'s description of the actresses which follows is on pp. 168-9.
4. E.T. *Lectures*, pp. 14-15.
5. Fanny Kemble wrote at about the time of her first confinement: 'I cannot believe that women were intended to suffer as much as they do, and be as helpless as they are, in child-bearing. In spite of the third chapter of Genesis, I cannot believe that all the agony and debility upon the entrance of a new creature into life was ordained.' E.T., writing to Shaw on 10 October 1896, said that whilst reading William Morris's *The Watching of the Falcon* she forgot her pangs 'on a certain bitter-sweet night in December' when Edy was born. (*A Correspondence*, p. 94.)
6. According to Marguerite Steen, this was because of Edy's 'difficult' reputation in the profession. If women had been invited to serve, Edy's presence would have been inevitable.
7. In all, E.T. received some £9,000-£6,000 from the commemoration performance, and £3,000 from the Ellen Terry Jubilee Celebration Fund inaugurated by the Liberal journal of the period, *The Tribune*. The Jubilee was also celebrated by a public dinner at which Winston Churchill presided. (See E.T. *Memoirs*, pp. 279-80; *A Correspondence*, p. 430).
8. At the time of writing, E.T.'s draft, like too many of her letters and other documents, was in the salesroom.
9. E.G.C. *Index*, pp. 287-8.
10. Terry-Shaw *A Correspondence*, p. xliv.
11. Heslewood was a stage designer, Forbes an actor.
12. For this and immediately succeeding quotations see *Edy*, pp. 20-30.
13. *Edy*, pp. 67-8.
14. For this and the quotation immediately following, see *Edy*, pp. 47 and 35-6.

15. *Time Was*, p. 316.
16. For these films, see pp. 319–22. For the occasional appearances of E.T. in the theatre during these later years, see *Memoirs*, pp. 283, 300.
17. *E.T. Memoirs*, p. 286.
18. *The Heart of Ellen Terry*, p. 67.
19. *E.T. Memoirs*, p. 287.
20. *E.T. Memoirs*, pp. 290–1.
21. *E.T. Memoirs*, p. 297. There is a discrepancy here concerning dates. E.C. tells me he did not actually go to live with his grandmother until the war years. Prior to this, he and his sister lived with their parents in various places on the Continent.
22. See Steen, *Pride of Terrys*, p. 326.
23. *Edy*, pp. 49–50.
24. See *E.T. Memoirs*, pp. 297–8. Both Little Nellie and Little Teddy were screen-tested with E.T. for the film, *Her Greatest Performance*. See p. 319.
25. I am grateful to John M. East for information concerning *Potter's Clay*.
26. *E.T. Memoirs*, p. 302.
27. *E.T. Memoirs*, p. 300.
28. *E.T. Memoirs*, p. 319.
29. For E.T.'s visits, see *Letters from Graham Robertson*, pp. 196–9. E.T. was a frequent visitor to Graham Robertson's house, Sandhills near Witley in Surrey. She was staying there on her birthday in February 1926, when the house was besieged by the Press. When leaving after what proved to be her last visit, she burst into tears, saying: 'I shall never be here again – I know it.'
30. This gold tissue material was already in the house, the gift of an actor who had brought it back from India so that E.T. might have a dress made from it. See *E.T. Memoirs*, p. 337.

Additional Note. E.T.'s ashes were enclosed in a silver casket designed by E.G.C.'s boyhood friend, Paul Cooper. A second memorial, quite distinct from that in St Paul's, Covent Garden, was commissioned by Edie Gwynn and her friends and executed by Gilbert, the monumental sculptor. This was erected in Little Easton Church, near Dunmow in Essex. A death mask was cast by Miss Margaret Winsor, as well as a cast of E.T.'s hands, and these are kept at Smallhythe.

ELLEN TERRY'S NOTES FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF LADY MACBETH

Ellen Terry's notes on the playing of the part of Lady Macbeth are scribbled over the blank interleaves of Irving's private edition of the play and on the pages carrying the printed text. She filled two copies of the play with her notes, and the more general observations she made on the characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have already been quoted in Chapter VII. What follows is a selection of the notes written alongside the text of the two copies. The notes were also adapted for a broadcast by the author in the B.B.C. Third Programme, and appeared in this form in the *Listener* on 2 February 1967.

Ellen Terry's notes on individual scenes naturally concentrate on the major appearances of Lady Macbeth in the play. All her speeches are carefully marked for inflexion, level and, above all, attitude of mind, and one can trace almost line by line how she approached the part. As she enters reading Macbeth's letter she writes, 'Steady. Breathe hard. Excited. Not too quick,' and 'It is wretched to be *discovered* on the stage. She shd be reading *at the back* by the fading light, and then come forward to the firelight to see better.' Of the lines. 'This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness' she marks the level for the word 'good' as 'subdued also quite low in tone excited' and has the words 'my dearest partner of greatness' marked with a query, 'linger on this? smiling'. After reading the letter she sits down saying, 'Glamis thou art, and Cawdor' and then whispers, 'and shalt be/What thou art promised.' The following lines, beginning 'Yet do I fear thy nature,' she marks as, 'He puzzles her', the speech becoming Lady Macbeth's unresolved attempt to analyse her husband's weakness of character as she sees it. When the messenger arrives to interrupt her thoughts with the news of Duncan's intended stay at her castle, Ellen Terry marks in, 'Pause. Tremble. Breathe. Take time.' in reaction to this fortuitous news, and adds, 'Don't believe him except for the first moment.' When Lady Macbeth finally takes it in and says 'He brings/*great news*', she notes 'High. Breathless. Slow'.

Ellen Terry realizes that the great 'unsexing' prayer that follows is the first exacting test of her as a tragic actress. She notes, 'I *must* try to do this: 2 years ago I could not *even* have tried.' Of Lady Macbeth at this moment she says: 'She goads herself on to crime. She feels she has only a *woman's* strength and calls on "Spirits".' Then she adds: 'The tale of the witches fired her imagination, and kindled her hopes. Under her lonely battlements she dreamed of future splendour – she did *not* realize the measure of the crime.' In the speech itself 'remorse' is marked. 'Keep *that* from me!' the 'compunctious visiting of nature' are marked 'Action of pushing it away –' while the word 'nature' is noted. 'She dreads *that*'. The climax of the speech – 'Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark/ To cry "Hold, hold!"' is marked, 'Keep voice down'.

When Macbeth arrives, there are many directions how Lady Macbeth should behave. Before she says of Duncan, 'And when *goes* hence?' Ellen Terry writes 'Right hand eagerly on M.'s breast. Action first', and adds that the line should be 'slow' and that she should 'smile', her hand drawn back sharply from Macbeth on the lines, 'O, never/ Shall sun *that* morrow see'. Alongside the 'beguiling' speech, during which she begins her temptation of Macbeth to commit the murder of Duncan, Ellen Terry suggests: 'Smile at him. Bright. Quick! Aflame! Alert.' Against the final lines beginning, 'Only look up clear . . .', she writes, 'Closer in, she too plotting. Charm. Serpent.' Then she adds: 'He can't face things and *talk* of 'em, but he can *do* them. *She* can talk and plan but shd not be able *to do* so easily.' In the brief scene of greeting to Duncan that follows, she notes that Lady Macbeth should be, 'Most modest, knowing her place,' that she should 'Speak it musically' and act like 'the innocent flower'.

The next major scene involves the final spurring on of Macbeth to kill Duncan. 'I love this scene,' she notes, and calls Lady Macbeth 'the spur'. The margin is covered with single words revealing the attitude she should adopt to Macbeth. 'Severely; sarcasm; cold; distant; quiet; dangerous; accusing'; 'Stand still and look at him,' she says at one point. But everything should be kept quiet until the lines, 'What *beast* was't then/ That made you break this enterprise to me?' Here, she notes, a change should begin, but there should be 'no rant'; only 'amaze'. The voice should be kept 'deep' and 'low', taunting him for his cowardice; after all, as she puts it, 'He suggested the murder and she caught on.'

Ellen Terry interprets, 'You are a coward, that's what all this means.' The lines, 'I have given suck, and know/How tender 'tis to love . . .' are marked, 'Only an exaggeration, as she is in a fury', and she adds, 'She loved her babies and she could not kill the man who looked like her Father. (*Woman*)' – doubly underscored, that! Even the climax – '. . . and dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as *you*/ Have done to this,' are marked 'Low down voice always'. She notes as a plea to Irving that he should cut in quickly with the point, 'If we should fail?' Her immediate response to this is annotated, 'Strong downward inflection' – '*We fail*'; here she follows Mrs Siddons's final interpretation of resignation, but she marks the follow-up lines: 'But screw your courage to the sticking-place,/ And we'll not fail . . .' as requiring a 'Slow change developing into a "great change"'. 'All women are clever at *contriving* merely,' she adds in the margin. Lady Macbeth then starts on the detailed planning of the murder in order to give him the courage to carry it out: 'Be damned *charming*,' she adds with a touch of the Terry humour. 'Now see – here is a beautiful plan which your wife has thought all out (the hell-cat).'

When Lady Macbeth comes to support her husband in the very act of murder, Ellen Terry makes the point that she is 'excited by wine' and she notes the 'horrid smile' adopted by Mrs Siddons. She must use this smile herself when saying the lines, 'I have drugg'd their possets —' 'Smile. Devil,' she notes. When Macbeth cries out off-stage, the 'agony of suspense' begins for her; she has to fight back her own weakness for so long as Macbeth proves weak. This is the whole tenor of the notes. He comes back: 'Together now,' writes Ellen Terry, 'she is relieved.' She also has to cope with Irving, who she guesses will take no notice of Lady Macbeth's interruptions as Macbeth dwells obsessively on what he has just done. 'He is sure to go on here,' she notes. She also has to cope with the demonstrative Victorian audiences. When Irving will finally have reached the climax, 'Macbeth shall sleep no more', she notes. 'If applause wait petrified and then shake off and say "who was it that . . ." If not applause say at once "who was it" the *right way*'. As for the right way, she notes that Lady Macbeth's attitude during her speech must express initially 'torture' and 'alarm'. She writes further: 'Watching him she thinks on – "Why he is quite ill! Come. Come. The danger's *past now* — Consider it not so *deeply*.'" This last not stern and angry, but with some feminine consideration mixed with alarm.' Then she adds another point: 'Remember the murder is done – not *heavy*. A little

flutter and whisper, but he's been a good fellow – he has not *failed* – don't press him too far – bear with him – humour him.'

The solution for Lady Macbeth at this moment of crisis, according to Ellen Terry's notes, is for her to overcome her innate 'fear of possible defeat' and 'summon a *tone* to work on him. Upon my soul, you should be ashamed. You want shaking.' She puts this against the line, 'Go get some water . . .' She puts 'angry' against the line, 'Why did you bring these daggers from the place?' and 'Grandly, I'll do it' against the exclamation, 'Infirm of purpose!' 'Nothing else for it. I must do it myself,' she adds. The lines, 'If he do bleed . . .', she marks, 'This should be to herself, I think.' Her return from the murder-chamber is marked 'Creep on', and her lines, 'My hands are of your colour,' are noted 'Sarcastic; keep cool'. Her voice must be kept 'low' and 'quiet' and, since Macbeth will be transfixed with guilt, she must '*push him pull him off the stage*'. Against the line: 'Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more . . ."' she writes, 'The most awful line in the play if one realizes what it means to his guilt-burdened mind. Poor wretch, he does not sleep after this.'

This reading of the part makes Lady Macbeth's faint in the following scene a natural one, claims Ellen Terry. 'She faints 'cos she *may*,' is how she puts it. When Lady Macbeth comes on following the alarm caused by the discovery of the murder, she notes: 'Play here not the loud-voiced commanding Queen but the frightened "innocent flower".' She prepares carefully for Lady Macbeth's reaction to her husband's able and self-possessed command of the situation: 'She stands dead still listening. She is *not* (in truth) horrified by this news – "*Anything, anything to be safe.*"' Strung up, past pitch, she gives in at the end of his speech when she finds he is safely through his story, and *then she faints, really*. Strung up at first she relaxes when all seems safe and they swallow her husband's masterly explanation. Listen until her ears crack, or she faints (which she *does*) – faints after pent-up agony and anxiety, *from relief*.'

On her first appearance as the Queen, Lady Macbeth is preoccupied and depressed. 'Naught's had, all's spent,' she says, and against this line, E.T. notes, 'Hands to head. Albert Dürer's Melancholy. Express here (when *alone*) a "rooted sorrow" – a half-dulled knowledge of the fact of her husband having been all the while deceived in her. She sees clearer now, knows she has missed what she had hoped to gain I sometimes think she is rather stupid!!' Then she adds: 'Beware of showing

the pathetic result of trouble upon a *good* woman. Lady Macbeth is not too good. Grief and trouble softens I think a *good* nature but hardens a bad one.' Lady Macbeth should be 'Rossetti-mournful', she says, when speaking the lines leading up to, 'What's done is done.' Then she adds, 'Cautious but not repentant, but let everything be damned before we give up now.' During Macbeth's speech beginning, 'We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it . . .', she suggests: 'She looks frightened at him'; then, 'During this she pities him and turns more tender. His trouble affected her – for she loved him.' Alongside Lady Macbeth's line, 'Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks . . .' she paraphrases: 'Come. Come. You must pluck up courage. Remember the tea-party tonight', and adds: 'Mournful. Gentle. Forced cheerfulness. Kisses his head. Soothe him. Deep voice.'

Mrs Siddons made Lady Macbeth responsible for suggesting to Macbeth that Banquo and Fleance should be murdered through the way she said the single line, 'But in them nature's copy's not eterne'. Ellen Terry will have none of this; her reaction is merely feminine, and she paraphrases the line with yet another touch of Terry mischief: 'Don't trouble so, for they cannot live for ever – that fellow Banquo may die any day – *why not!* and the boy may have whooping cough in such a climate as this – and we keep all the whisky to ourselves – I lock up the cupboard every night.' Nevertheless, she ends the scene with the note: 'Nervous clutch at his sleeve. Henry goes out first. *Sit still*, I think and try to find the meaning of his words. Anxious. Uncertain and rather ill.'

The banquet scene – what she calls the royal 'tea-party', follows. This social event at a time of deep misgiving should begin with 'double acting', at once 'royal' and yet revealing to the audience very clearly Lady Macbeth's 'secret uneasiness'. When Macbeth toasts her 'brilliantly' (her word), Lady Macbeth 'drinks *deep*' (doubly underlined in the margin). Banquo comes in – a solid ghost gliding unobserved to his place, as she notes, adding: 'First – the ghost might look like an ordinary man and then *develop* into ghost-like appearance by lighting (Lime)'. Mrs Siddons, by the way, let Lady Macbeth see the ghost at the same time as her husband; not so Ellen Terry, who made Lady Macbeth rise to the occasion in just the same way as she did after the murder of Duncan. 'How he *will talk!*' she mutters in the margin when Macbeth goes out of his way to challenge the dead Banquo to come to the feast; says Ellen Terry, 'She *knows* he is hysterical, and "giving

way" to "acting" before people. He "shows off". When the guests are departed he drops it all. Meanwhile, when Macbeth says, 'The table's full', Lady Macbeth is drinking again, but stops at once when he starts to address Banquo. She takes the situation, E.T. notes, 'with *great* – quick – decision. *Then* except for pausing entirely hide all emotion – Smile.' She comes down-stage, taking command at once, 'turning some of the women bodily round' – 'Feed, and *regard him not*'. Then she whispers hoarsely into Macbeth's ear, 'peevish and scornful' – '*O proper stuff!*' (doubly underlined). 'When all's done,/ You look but on a stool' is paraphrased: 'A chair. A fine thing to be frightened of.' On 'Fie, *for shame!*' (whispered), she writes: 'She shd fill his place.' Then she adds: 'Catch the eye of First Lady Guest and go to her. Then speak to all the others and call for wine.' She notes that the lines, 'My worthy lord,/ Your noble friends do lack you' should be 'Not severe but with playful amazement are you deaf or blind. Don't you see your noble friends do lack you?' The lines, 'Think of this, good peers,/ But as a thing of custom: 'tis no other/ Only it spoils the pleasure of the time', she annotates, "'pleasure" Oh Lor' how grim. I wonder she don't go mad.' But the lines, she says, should be spoken, 'Sweetly but with a ghastly mouth. The *mouth* tells all the pain and the effort and the madness.' In the end, When Lady Macbeth says, 'You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,/ With most admired disorder', Ellen Terry writes 'She allows the guests here to *see* that she reproves him – but not *before*. She settles that something must be done so does not return to her seat, but says goodnight to some of the guests and gets rid of them.' By now she is really frightened: 'Stand not upon the order of your going/ But go at once', is said with 'voice choked. Alarm. Hurry. Convulsive fear.' Nevertheless, she manages to 'smile and smile' as they go.

When she is at last alone with Macbeth, her fear may be allowed to show itself fully; she has almost nothing left to say. Ellen Terry writes: 'She goes to the window for air and falls all of a heap, and sees "it is almost at odds with morning which is which" . . . She is now beginning to know him well and is thoroughly frightened at him. I think she feels pretty frail – and that her *reason* here begins to be shaken.' She adds: 'Notice he never speaks harshly to his "chuck". By suffering at this point she pays penance and repents – all is forgiven. First thing she does is take off her crown. How about trying to ease his head by taking off his crown – which he the more firmly plants *on his* head.' This is her last

moment on the stage before the sleepwalking scene, and her distressed state of mind must be shown. 'Now - she knows him,' writes Ellen Terry. 'Now *Lady Macbeth* shall sleep no more - for she is at last - *frightened!*' 'We are yet but young in deed', says Macbeth, but E.T. comments, "'Young in deed." *He* to go off full of vigour, *blood - more blood!!* *She*, left behind - dazed - turn weary - faint - and stagger to the throne - Alone - *Isolation* - On the throne - Crown on her lap. laugh? Dark. *Curtain.*'

The sleepwalking scene is now fully anticipated, but Ellen Terry prepares herself for it in her notes. 'She took to sleepwalking when Macbeth went into the field. Remember she is weak and asleep. Macbeth preyed on her mind more than the deed. *This* might be some time afterwards and grey hair would be pathetic. For both of them have gone through enough to *make 'em grey.*' Her entrance is marked as 'hurried and excited', her actions undertaken with 'trembling hands - she is very weak. Rub the *Palms* of hands.' (Mrs Siddons scooped up imaginary water with one hand and poured it over the other.) The words 'Out, damned spot', are marked: 'Out, *damned* (high voice; pause) spot (pause) out, I say! One: two: (low and long) why, then 'tis time to do't (whisper).' The line, 'The thane of Fife had a wife' is marked: 'Horror! One of the murders Macbeth never told her about'; 'Where is she now?' is a whisper. When she re-enacts the murder scene, her deepest anxieties are revealed as the root of her madness.

When she leaves the stage after this, the notes on the playing of the individual scenes finish. Lady Macbeth does not appear again.

PAGES FROM ELLEN TERRY'S
ANNOTATED COPY OF *MACBETH*

Do. he "pretend" then?
I think not - only "a silly
ass" to suggest the obvious.

When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber and us'd their very daggers,
That they have done't?

Lady M. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death?

Macb. I'm settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

She gives him courage = [Exit.]

Lady M comes back
& goes out R.E.

She loved her babies
& she could not kill
The man who looked
like her Father =

(Woman.)

(in truth)

She is not horrified by
this news - "Any thing -

Any thing to be safe -

stung up, part pitch, she

gives in ^{at} the end of his speech

when she finds he is safely
through his story & then

She faints trally -

stung up at first she

all seems

"The danger to her was that it was past - as it does most on
-minded with women" Omida - (under two stages).

There's nothing serious in mortality :
All is but toys : renown and grace is dead ;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.

Don. What is amiss ?

Macb. You are, and do not know't :
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopp'd—the very source of it is stopp'd.

Macd. Your royal father's murder'd. *(Practical)*

Mal. *(He kills him.)* O! by whom?

Len. Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had
done't: *(murdered in voice, deep)*

Their hands and faces were all badg'd with blood ;
So were their daggers, which, unwip'd, we found

Upon their pillows:

They star'd, and were distracted ; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.

Macb. O, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them. *(all the)*

Macd. Wherefore did you so ?

Macb. Who can be wise, amaz'd, temperate and
furious,

Loyal and neutral, in a moment ? No man :

The expedition of my violent love

Outran the pauser, reason.—Here lay Duncan ;—

His silver skin lac'd with his golden blood,

And his gash'd stabs, look'd like a breach in nature,

For ruin's wasteful entrance : there, the murderers,

Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers

Unmannerly breech'd with gore : who could refrain,

That had a heart to love, and in that heart,

Courage, to make's love known ?

Lady M.

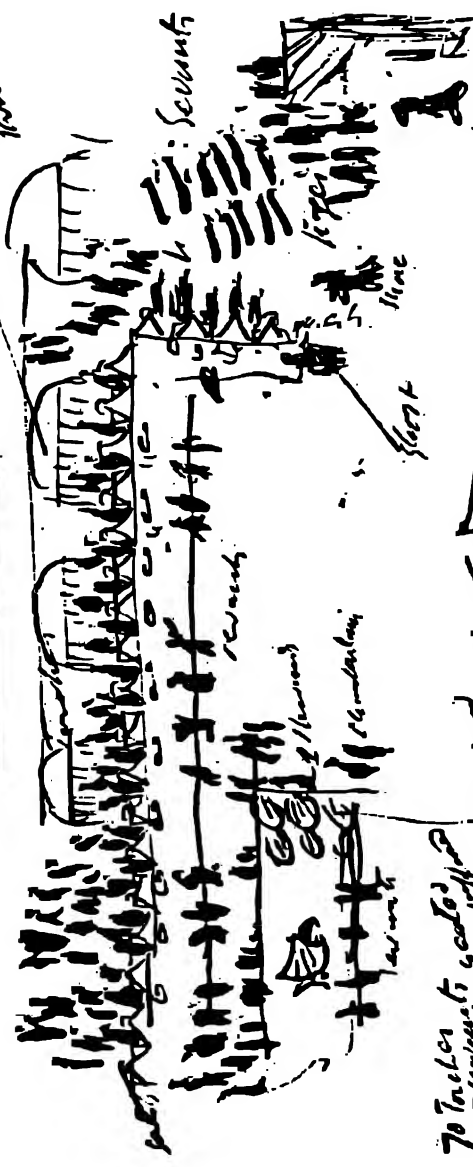
Help me hence, ho!

Ban. Look to the lady.

[Lady MACBETH is carried out.]

2d Murderer
3d Murderer

the bands - windows moving
 - moving
 two



Hewy did this + sent it - me
 in Berlin - his first idea
 for the Bauguet scene -

To make it a scene
 15 seconds - on the
 1st scene - 1st
 400 feet
 1st scene - 1st
 1st scene - 1st

THE PARTS PLAYED BY ELLEN TERRY AT THE LYCEUM IN ASSOCIATION WITH HENRY IRVING

Date	Play	H.I.	E.T.
30.12.78	<i>Hamlet</i>	Hamlet	Ophelia
17. 4.79	<i>Lady of Lyons</i>	Melnotte	Pauline
6. 6.79	<i>Eugene Aram</i>	Eugene Aram	Ruth
27. 6.79	<i>Charles I</i>	Charles I	Henrietta Maria
4. 7.79	<i>The Lyons Mail</i>	Dubosc and Lesurques	Jeanette
25. 7.79	<i>Richard III</i> (Act I)	Gloster	Lady Anne
	<i>Raising the Wind</i>	Jeremy Diddler	Peggy
1.11.79	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Shylock	Portia
20. 5.80	<i>Iolanthe</i>	Count Tristan	Iolanthe
3. 1.81	<i>The Cup</i>	Synorix	Camma
16. 4.81	<i>The Belle's Stratagem</i>	Doricourt	Letitia Hardy
2. 5.81	<i>Othello</i>	Othello/Iago	Desdemona
23. 7.81	<i>The Hunchback</i> (scene)	Modus	Helen
8. 3.82	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Romco	Juliet
11.10.82	<i>Much Ado about Nothing</i>	Benedick	Beatrice
14. 6.83	<i>Robert Macaire</i>	Robert Macaire	Clementine
8. 7.84	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Malvolio	Viola
27. 5.85	<i>Olivia</i>	Dr Primrose	Olivia
19.12.85	<i>Faust</i>	Mephistopheles	Marguerite
1. 6.87	<i>Werner</i>	Werner	Josephine
29.12.88	<i>Macbeth</i>	Macbeth	Lady Macbeth
28. 9.89	<i>The Dead Heart</i>	Robert Landry	Catherine Duval

Date	Play	H.I.	E.T.
20. 9.90	<i>Ravenswood</i>	Edgar	Lucy Ashton
5. 1.92	<i>King Henry VIII</i>	Cardinal Wolsey	Queen Katherine
10.11.92	<i>King Lear</i>	King Lear	Cordelia
6. 2.93	<i>Becket</i>	Becket	Rosamund
12. 1.95	<i>King Arthur</i>	King Arthur	Guinevere
22. 9.96	<i>Cymbeline</i>	Iachimo	Imogen
10. 4.97	<i>Madame Sans- Gêne</i>	Napoleon	Catherine (Mme Sans-Gêne)
1. 1.98	<i>Peter the Great</i>	Peter the Great	Catherine
4. 5.98	<i>The Medicine Man</i>	Dr Tregenna	Sylvia Wynford
5. 4.99	<i>Robespierre</i>	Robespierre	Clarisse
15. 4.01	<i>Coriolanus</i>	Coriolanus	Volumnia

Without Irving, Ellen Terry appeared with the Lyceum company in:

7. 6.87	<i>The Amber Heart</i>	Ellaline
20. 7.93	<i>Nance Oldfield</i>	Anne Oldfield
Early 1895	<i>Godefroi and Yolande</i>	Yolande

NOTES ON THE PRINCIPAL NON-SHAKESPEAREAN PLAYS IN WHICH ELLEN TERRY APPEARED AT THE LYCEUM

THE AMBER HEART (Alfred C. Calmour). Produced for a single performance at the Lyceum on 7 June 1887 and revived for a short season in May 1888. The dramatic copyright of this play, described as 'a graceful trifle', was presented to Ellen Terry by Irving.

BECKET (Alfred, Lord Tennyson; 1884). First produced at the Lyceum in 1893. The action of the play turns on the dispute between Henry II, originally played by William Terriss, and Becket which leads finally to the Archbishop's assassination. Ellen Terry played the very subsidiary part of Rosamund, the King's mistress, whom Becket protects from the jealous plots of Eleanor, Henry's Queen.

THE BELLE'S STRATAGEM (Hannah Cowley; 1780). First produced at the Lyceum in 1881. Doricourt returns from his travels to fulfil an arranged marriage with Letitia Hardy. He receives her coldly, and she sets out to win his love, first of all by assuming a hoydenish manner in order to affront him, and then taking him by storm with a sudden switch-over to charm and vivacity. She succeeds.

CHARLES I (W. G. Wills; 1872). First produced at the Lyceum in 1879. A romantic historical play originally written for Bateman. It presented the King in a sympathetic light in his losing struggle, more especially with the harsh character of Cromwell and the treachery of the Earl of Moray. The play aimed at pathos at the expense of history, and finished with the parting of Charles and his Queen prior to his execution.

THE CUP (Alfred, Lord Tennyson; 1881). First produced at the Lyceum in 1881. A two-act tragedy concerning the plot of the Galatian Synorix to murder Camma's husband Sinnatus in order to obtain her for himself. Camma takes refuge as a priestess in the temple of Diana, where she poisons her suitor by inducing him to drink poisoned wine in

libation to the goddess. After this, she poisons herself. The play was put on initially along with *The Corsican Brothers*, and later with *The Belle's Stratagem*.

THE DEAD HEART (Watts Philips). First produced at the Adelphi in 1859, and at the Lyceum in 1889. The story is set against the background of the French Revolution. Robert Landry, the hero, is a sculptor in Paris. Before the Revolution, he and the Count de St Valéry had both been in love with Catherine Duval. Catherine is tricked by the villain, the Abbé Latour, into marrying the Count, believing Landry, whom Latour has contrived to imprison in the Bastille, to be dead. The Count dies, but leaves her with a son, played at the Lyceum by Gordon Craig. The play turns on Landry's revenge when he is released eighteen years later after the storming of the Bastille. At the end, he discovers Catherine, learns the truth, and saves the young Count from the guillotine by taking his place.

EUGENE ARAM (W. G. Wills; 1873). First produced at the Lyceum in 1879. Based on Thomas Hood's poem, and written during the period of Bateman's management of the Lyceum in order to provide Irving with the part of another man, like Mathias of *The Bells*, who is haunted by his evil past. Irving was fond of reciting Hood's poem. Ellen Terry played the small but sympathetic part of Ruth Meadows, the clergyman's daughter whom Eugene secretly loves.

FAUST (W. G. Wills). Commissioned by Irving, and produced in 1885. The story followed the pattern of Gounod rather than of Goethe.

IOLANTHE (W. G. Wills; 1849). First produced at the Lyceum in 1880. A one-act play, taken from a Danish original, *King René's Daughter*. There were several versions on the Victorian stage of this play by Henrik Hertz, and the title-role was played by Mrs Charles Kean, Helen Faucit, and others. The central character is Iolanthe, the blind daughter of the King, whose sight is miraculously restored. Its main appeal was pathos. Irving played Count Tristan, Iolanthe's lover.

KING ARTHUR (J. Comyns-Carr). A play in blank verse written in 1894 for Irving, the story loosely taken from Malory rather than from Tennyson. It concentrates on the love of Guinevere for Lancelot (originally played by Forbes-Robertson) and the injury she does her blameless husband. The play was produced in 1895.

THE LADY OF LYONS (Lord Bulwer-Lytton; 1838). Produced at the Lyceum in 1879. A romantic period play, originally produced by Macready in 1838 with Helen Faucit. The central character is Pauline

Deschappelles, who was supposed to be a proud, if hysterical woman. Ellen Terry played her for pathos and fragility in her unhappy relations with her erring and rhetorical lover, Claude Melnotte, whom Irving played as 'deeply tragic, absorbed and highly nervous'.

THE LYONS MAIL (Charles Reade; 1854). Produced at the Lyceum in 1879. Adapted from a French original, *Le Courier de Lyons* (and called at first *The Courier of Lyons*), this romantic melodrama originally written for Charles Kean, centres on an actual robbery near Paris in 1796 of the mail carrying the pay for Napoleon's troops in Italy. Mystery surrounds the identity of the robber. There was evidence against Lesurques, a businessman who was accused and sentenced to the guillotine; later a gang-leader, Dubosc, became suspected as the real culprit. Confusion was further caused by the men's resemblance to each other, and this gave Irving his opportunity to exploit his virtuosity in a double role. He played Lesurques for innocence and Dubosc for sardonic, drunken villainy. Ellen Terry played the subordinate part of Jeanette, Dubosc's mistress, and the play ended with a last-minute reprieve for Lesurques. *MADAME SANS-GENE* (Victorien Sardou and Emile Moreau; 1893). Translated for Irving by J. Comyns-Carr in 1897. The title-role was created in London by Réjane. Catherine, a spirited French washer-woman, becomes a duchess in Napoleon's court. She retains her old, blunt ways, and is ordered by Napoleon to divorce her husband and retire from court. But she reminds Napoleon of the days of struggle in which she shared, and of the laundry bill he still owes her. The Emperor relents, and reinstates her. The play was produced at the Lyceum in 1897.

THE MEDICINE MAN (H. D. Traill and Robert Hitchens). Written for Irving, and produced in 1898. The central figure of this play was a wealthy, West-End doctor who disguises himself and uses hypnotism in the course of trying to conduct social reform in the East-End, where he works with London's poor.

NANCE OLDFIELD (Charles Reade). Nance Oldfield was a popular actress of the early eighteenth century. In the play she tries to cure the romantic love which a young man conceives for her through seeing her on the stage by pretending to be a tom-boyish hoyden when she is off it. It gave Ellen Terry an opportunity to display her high spirits and sense of comedy, as well as her charm. Produced at the Lyceum in 1893.

OLIVIA (W. G. Wills). Based on Goldsmith's story, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, the plot of the play turns on the seduction of Olivia

daughter of the kindly parson, Dr Primrose, by the villainous Squire Thornhill. Produced at the Lyceum in 1885.

PETER THE GREAT (Laurence Irving). Produced at the Lyceum in 1898. This play turned on the unhappy relations between the overbearing Czar and his weak, retiring son, on whose irresolute nature the intrigues of the court depend. Ellen Terry played Catherine, the Czar's second wife.

RAVENSWOOD (Herman Merivale). Produced at the Lyceum in 1890. Adapted from Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor* Irving, working with Merivale, was forced to truncate the plot. Edgar of Ravenswood (Irving) falls in love with Lucy Ashton (Ellen Terry), daughter of Sir William Ashton, who has ruined Ravenswood's father so that the son is deprived of his title. Ravenswood vows revenge. Lucy's mother, who is opposed to Ravenswood, tricks Lucy into marriage with the laird of Bucklaw. Lucy, on learning the truth, goes mad, Ophelia-like, and dies. Ravenswood dies too, caught in quicksands. The story is well known now to opera-goers.

ROBESPIERRE (Victorien Sardou). A play commissioned by Irving and translated by Laurence Irving. A political melodrama written to give Irving, who naturally played Robespierre, a grandiloquent part in the setting of the French Revolution. Ellen Terry's part was the very subsidiary one of Clarisse.

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INDEX

This Index incorporates names and principal references except for the plays and parts in which E.T. appeared, which are included in a separate Index. Principal references appearing in the Notes are included in both indices.

- Abbey, Henry E., 167
 Abingdon, Frances, 102
 Achurch, Janet, 260, 275, 308
 Ainley, Henry, 300
 Alexander, George, 160, 183, 189
Alice in Wonderland (Lewis Carroll), 55, 61
 Allen, J. H., 114
 Alma-Tadema, Sir Laurence, 116
 American tours (Lyceum Company), 164-84, 190, 216, 346-7
 Anderson, Mary, 231
 Archer, William, 119, 189, 213
 Aria, Mrs Eliza, 272-3
Arms and the Man (G. B. Shaw), 259
 Armstrong, William, 30
 Arnold, Matthew, 294
 Asche, Oscar, 253, 300
 Ashwell, Lena, 238-40, 252, 299
 Atwood, Clare (Tony), 317
 Austin, L. F., 181, 182-3
 Aveling, Edward, 259
- Baird, Dorothea (later Mrs H. B. Irving), 235-6
 Ball, Meredith, 177
 Ballard, Peter (grandfather of E. T.), 2
 Bancroft, Marie (later Lady), 87-93
 Bancroft, Squire (later Sir), 88-93, 115, 145, 160
 Barnes, Hilda ('Barney'), 327-9
 Barrett, Lawrence, 168
 Barrie, Sir James, 254, 298
 Barry, Elizabeth, 102
 Bartlett, Ashmead, 127
 Bastien-Lepage, Jules, 163
 Bateman, Hezekiah Linthicum, 105
- Bateman, Mrs H. L., 105-7
 Bateman, Isabel, 107
 Bateman, Virginia, 107
 Beecher, Mr and Mrs Henry Ward, 173-4
 Beefsteak Room (Lyceum Theatre), 162-3, 233-6, 343
 Beerbohm, Max (later Sir), 29
 Beeton, Mrs, 297
 Behnes, Charles, 37
 Behnes, William, 37
 Bellamy, George Anne, 102
The Bells (Leopold Lewis), 105, 116-19, 147-8, 170, 172, 216, 250, 256, 264
 Benson, Sir Frank R., 115, 160-1, 240
 Bernhardt, Sarah, 68, 150-2, 167, 224-5, 231, 288-92, 324, 343
 Besant, Annie, 259, 352
 Betterton, Thomas, 102
 Bindloss, Miss (governess), 338
 'Bo' (nursemaid), 95
The Bohemian Girl (film), 321
 Boito, Arrigo, 289
 'Boo' (see Mrs Rumball)
 Booth, Barton, 102
 Booth, Edwin, 104, 115, 154-5, 154-6, 166, 224
 Booth, John Wilkes, 155
 Booth, Junius Brutus, 154, 166
 Boucicault, Dion, 104
Box and Cox (see *Cox and Box*)
 Bracegirdle, Anne, 102
 Braithwaite, Lillian, 299
 Bramly, Mrs Bertha Jennings, 228-30, 233, 251
 Brenon, Herbert, 321
 Brereton, Austin, 167

- Brodribb, Samuel (father of H.I.), 103-4
 Brodribb, Mrs S. (mother of H.I.), 103-4
 Brown, Curtis, 313
 Browning, Robert, 45, 56
 Buckstone, John Baldwin, 33-5
 Burbage, Richard, 102
 Burdett-Coutts, Baroness Angela, 127
 Burges, William, 31-3, 69, 73
 Burnand, F. C. (later Sir), 63, 199
 Burne-Jones, Sir Edward, 116, 187, 213, 316
 Butler, Samuel, 316
 Bym, Oscar, 12

 Cafiero, Martino, 288-9
 Caine, Hall, 321
 Calmour, A. C., 189, 195, 245
 Cameron, Mrs Julia Margaret (*née* Pattle), 42, 53
 Campbell, Lady Archibald, 222, 348
 Campbell, Mrs Patrick, 299
Candida (G. B. Shaw), 269, 308
 Carew (Usselman), James, 165, 301-3, 328
 Carroll, Lewis (Rev. C. L. Dodgson), 14, 15, 54-5, 61, 70, 81, 93, 97, 98, 100-1, 128, 160, 235-8, 337, 441
 Caruso, Enrico, 299
 Chaplin, Charlie, 264
 Chapman, Ronald, 49, 51
 Chase, Pauline, 239
 Chekhov, Anton Pavlovich, 8
 Chevalier, Albert, 314
 Chicchi, Tebaldo, 289
 Chippendale, W. H., 34, 104
 Churchill, Lord Randolph, 223, 304
 Churchill, Sir Winston, 304, 354
 Chute, James Henry, 25-33
 Cibber, Susanna Maria, 102
 Clarke, Hamilton, 120
 Coghlan, Charles, 26, 89-90, 92-3, 97, 109
 Coleman, John, 4
 Coleridge, Gilbert, 172
 Coleridge, Stephen, 137, 141, 182, 225, 232-3, 303, 313, 343
 Collier, Constance, 299, 321
 Collins, José, 321
 Comédie Française, 147-53, 167
 Compton, Fay, 34
 Compton, Henry, 34
 Comyns-Carr, Alice, 80, 90, 121, 122, 186-90, 197-8, 224-5, 227, 234-5, 343, 345
 Comyns-Carr, Joe, 80, 186-7, 190, 197, 213, 215-16, 239, 299
 Conservatoire Dramatique, 152
 Cook, Dutton, 18, 120
 Cooper, Frank, 251, 266
 Cooper, Gladys, 321
 Coquelin, Constant-Benoît, 149-50, 167, 223, 246, 299
 Corelli, Marie, 135
The Corsican Brothers (play), 153-4, 212
Cox and Box (F. C. Burnand and Arthur Sullivan), 61, 336
 Craig, Edith, 36, 48-9, 331; birth (1869), 70; childhood upbringing, 72, 79-80; as child in France, 77; described by Forbes-Robertson, 87; on E.T.'s marriage to Wardell, 99; fun at Hampton Court, 132-3; at Longridge Rd, 135, 138-9 on Kelly (Wardell), 139; at Tennyson's house, 153; criticizes Irving, 186; joins Lyceum Company, 212-13; educational background 219-21; acquires name of Ailsa Craig, 221-2; Irving as godfather, 222; later relationship with E.T., 243-4, 303 et seq; relationship with Christopher St John, 244, 303 et seq; at E.T. Jubilee performance, 299; attempts at marriage frustrated by E.T., 244, 305-6; as feminist, 309; work in theatre, 309-10; Gordon Craig on, 309-10; women friends, 317-18; in film with E.T., 320; acts as her mother's manager, 308, 311, 322; at Smallhythe at time of E.T.'s death, 328

- Craig, Edward Gordon: birth (1872) 71; childhood upbringing, 72, 79-80; described by Forbes-Robertson, 87; on separation E.T. and Godwin, 94; on E.T.'s marriage to Wardell, 99-100, 138; first meeting with grandmother Sarah, 100; meets Lewis Carroll, 100; as member Lyceum Co, 115; on Irving in *The Bells*, 116-19; fun as child at Hampton Court, 132-3; E.T. as mother, 134-5, 139, 219-21, 228; on character of E.T., 136-7; on E.T. and Irving, 140-1; on E.T. as actress, 144; antipathy to Chas. Reade, 338; joins E.T. in U.S.A. (1885), 182; as child in Lyceum Co, 182; on E.T. as Lady Macbeth, 196; Irving's opinion of, 212; position at Lyceum, 212, 220, 242; educational background, 219-20; relation with Godwin withheld from him, 220; acquires name of Gordon Graig, 221; relation with Irving as godfather, 222, 241-2, 248, 300; on Stephen Coleridge, 225; marriage to May Gibson, 212, 243; children (Nellie, Edward) by Elena Meo, 243; relation with Isadora Duncan, 254, 316, 325-6; G.B.S. on E.T.'s Jubilee performance, 300; later relations with E.T., 302; helped financially by E.T., 306, 351; at Smallhythe at time of E.T.'s death, 328-9.
- Craig (Carrick), Edward (grandson of E.T.), 243, 261, 311, 316-19, 331, 332, 337
- Craig, Nelly (grand-daughter of E.T.), 243, 261, 311, 316-19
- Craig, Peter, 300
- Craig, Robin, 300
- Craig, Rosemary, 300
- Crane, Walter, 72, 95
- Craven, Hawes, 116, 127, 128, 187, 197, 213
- Crisp, Henry, 33, 67
- Daisy's Escape* (A. W. Pinero), 159
- Dalrymple, Lady Sophie (*née* Pattle), 42, 48
- Daly, Augustin, 167
- d'Annunzio, Gabrielle, 289
- Davenant, William, 102
- The Devil's Disciple*, (G. B. Shaw), 269
- Dickens, Mrs Amy, 230
- Dickens, Charles, 19, 63, 68, 105
- Dickens, Enid, 230-1
- Di.raeli, Benjamin (Lord Beaconsfield), 45, 56
- Dodgson, Rev Charles Lutwidge (*see* Lewis Carroll)
- Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan, 299
- Duncan, Isadora, 254, 316, 324-6
- Duse, Eleanora, 151, 224, 288-92, 299, 320, 321, 324-5
- Egerton, Lady Mabel, 327
- Elliot, Gertrude, 299
- Emery, Winifred, 181, 189
- Esmond, H. V., 300 . .
- Evans, Dame Edith, 319
- Evans, Joe, 305
- Fabian, Society, 259-60
- Farr, Florence, 258-60
- Farren, William, 34
- Faucit, Helen, 374
- Fechter, Charles Albert, 33, 58
- Fitzgerald, Percy, 208
- Fontanne, Lynn, 239-40
- Forbes (-Robertson), Norman, 177, 266, 303
- Forbes-Robertson, Sir Johnston, 86-7, 95, 98, 115, 213, 266, 299
- Frohman, Charles, 316
- Furnival, Dr F. J., 129
- Fussy (dog), 166, 176
- Galsworthy, John, 298
- Garrick, David, 102, 113, 147, 150, 157
- German, Edward, 116
- Gibson, May, 243
- Gielgud, Sir John, 62, 129
- Gielgud, Kate Terry, 62, 129, 299

- Gilbert, W. S. (later Sir), 87, 95, 238-9, 299
- Gladstone, W. E., 45, 56
- Godwin, Edward William, 1, 112, 189, 201, 289, 294, 298, 300, 317, 327, 338-9, 340; youth and family background, 29; architectural self-training, 30-1; writes critical notices of Theatre Royal, Bristol, 31; initial successes as architect, 31-2; unique taste in interior decoration, 32; settles in London, 63; later career, 66-7; in love with E.T., 66-8, 336-7; lives with E.T., 69 et seq; problems and financial difficulties, 73-4, 86-7; articles on architecture and costume for Shakespearean production, 86; designs production *The Merchant of Venice* for Bancrofts, 88-92; marries Beatrice Phillips, 94; contrast with Wardell, 99; designs costumes for *The Cup*, 154; relationship withheld from his children, 220; death, 222, 241-2, 248, 348
- Godwin, Mrs Sarah, 29
- Gordon, Alicia Duff, 39
- Gordon, Lady Caroline Duff, 39-41
- Gordon, George Duff, 39-41
- Granville-Barker, Harley, 298
- Gunters (caterers Lyceum), 132, 163
- Gwenn, Edward, 300
- Gwynn, Mrs H. A. (Edie), 326-7
- Hall, Mary Anne, 58-60, 63, 66
- Hall, Radclyffe, 317
- Halsewell, Keeley, 197
- Hamilton, Cecily, 317
- Hare, Sir John, 93, 97-8, 145, 160
- Harries, Miss, 101, 134-5, 166, 170
- Harris, Frank, 213, 261-2, 334
- Harris, Patience, 189-90
- Hatton, Joseph, 167-84
- Heimat* (Sudermann); see *Magda*
- Henry Irving's Impressions of America* (Hatton), 167-84, 344
- Her Greatest Performance* (film), 319-22
- Herbert, Miss, 25
- Herschel, Sir John, 56
- Heslewood, Tom, 225, 303
- Hiatt, Charles, 125-6, 189, 197, 208
- Hicks, Sir Seymour, 299
- Hodson, Henrietta (Mrs Labouchère), 26-8, 64
- Holland, Lord and Lady, 38-41, 51
- Holland, Sarah, 159, 234-5, 304
- Hope, Anthony, 299
- Hopkins, Priscilla, 102
- Houghton, Lord, 63
- Howe, Henry, 34, 177
- Hughes, Tom, 45, 63
- Hunt, Holman, 48, 49, 56
- Ibsen, Henrik, 8, 265 et seq, 289, 298
- The Invasion of Britain* (film), 321
- Ionides, Constantine, 37
- The Iron Chest* (play), 127
- Irving, Sir Henry (John Henry Brodribb), 26, 29, 97, 99; first performance with E.T., 64-5, 105; sees E.T. at Court Theatre, 98; place in British theatrical lineage, 102; background and early theatrical career, 103-5; marriage and birth of sons, H.B. and Laurence Irving, 105; makes great reputation with *The Bells*, 105; takes over management of the Lyceum, 195, 107; invites E.T. to join him, 101, 107-8; E.T. on his performances as King Philip, 109, as Hamlet, 109-10, 111; qualities as actor criticized by Henry James, 110, 119, 147-8; Coquelin on, 150; production methods, 113-16; E.T. on character of Irving, 112; treatment of supporting actors, 115-16, 159-62; spectacular scenic effects, 116; Gordon Craig on H.I.'s performance in *The Bells*, 117-19; vocal peculiarities as actor, 119, 341; production policy, 178-9, 122-3; production costs at Lyceum, 116, 123, 128, 153, 156, 181, 189, 207, 208; profits and losses at Lyceum, 153, 167, 173, 178, 180, 183, 189, 215-16, 346-7; visits Venice,